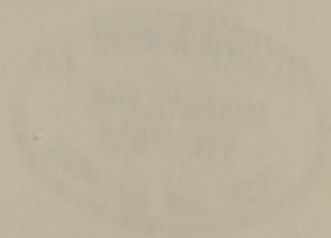


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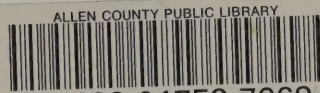
*A Memoir of its
Diamond Jubilee*

(1852)



Published by the Trustees of the Asylum

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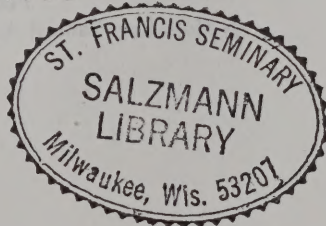
1934

*History of
St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum
Tacony, Philadelphia*



*A Memoir of its
Diamond Jubilee*

1855 — 1933



by

Rev. Francis Xavier Roth, O. S. A.

"NORD-AMERIKA", PRESS
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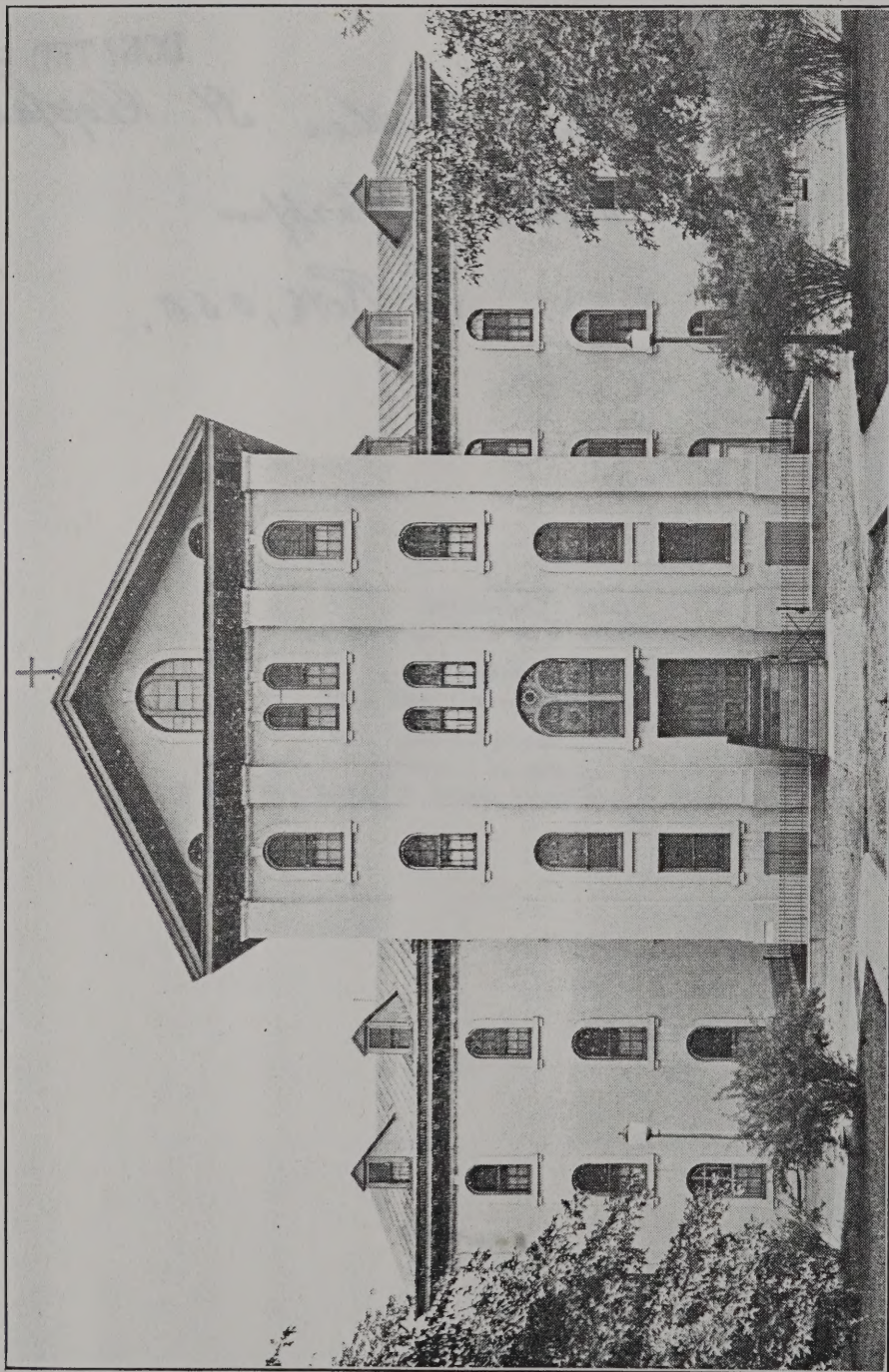
✠ Most Rev. Samuel A. Stritch, *Archbishop of Milwaukee.*

DONATED BY

Yours sincere Father St. Klopfer

mit besten Wünschen

Fr. Roth, O.S.A.,



ST. VINCENT'S ORPHAN ASYLUM OF TACONY, PHILADELPHIA



HIS HOLINESS, POPE PIUS XI



HIS EMINENCE, D. CARDINAL DOUGHERTY,
Archbishop of Philadelphia



CARDINAL'S OFFICE
225 N. 10TH STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

September 26th, 1933.

Rev. M. C. Will, C.S.B.
St. Peter's Church,
Philadelphia, Pa.

My dear Father Will:

Your kind invitation to the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Tacony, on October 12th next, has been received with gratitude.

Please accept my thanks for your courtesy.

On October 12th I am slated to attend the Priests' Conference at Tanques; and, accordingly, shall be unable to avail myself of your kind invitation.

This opportunity is gladly taken to thank and congratulate the Board of Managers and the Reverend Sisters in charge of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum; and to encourage them to continue in their good work, which God has blessed during three quarters of a century.

Only God knows how much good has been done by all concerned in so long a stretch of time.

Trusting you are well, I remain, my dear Father Will,

Very sincerely yours,

H. D. Card Dougherty
Abp. of Phila.



MOST REV. GERALD P. O'HARA, D. D., J. U. D., V. G.
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

FOREWORD



HIS souvenir of the Diamond Jubilee of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum of Tacony, Philadelphia, was written by request of its Board of Managers. For more than three years I collected in my spare time every available item of information. It was work joyfully done in appreciation of the kindness shown to me and the happiness found in my seven years as chaplain of St. Vincent's.

There are few orphanages in the United States, surely none in the Diocese of Philadelphia, with so wide a field of activity and with such abundance of source material as St. Vincent's possesses; therefore the more scientific style of writing was purposely chosen. To my knowledge this is the first extensive history of any Catholic Orphanage in the United States. If the first book of this kind is not so satisfactory as some might wish, I may be pardoned.

To all who have helped so kindly in preparing this book, I extend my heartiest thanks. To my confrere, Father Renatus Titus, O. S. A. and to Sister Dympna of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, I owe a great debt of gratitude for the revising of the manuscript. John W. Speckman, Esq., legal adviser of the Home for the past forty years, has been ever kind in answering my questions. Special thanks are due to our students, both boys and girls, who wrote and rewrote my manuscript with great patience and interest.

May St Vincent's continue to flourish during the next twenty-five years, and may this history contribute a little to her progress. A thorough knowledge of the past has always been a great help in finding the directions for the future.

*"Und da sich die neuen Tage aus dem Schutt der alten bauen,
Kann ein ungetrübtes Auge rückwärts blickend vorwärts
schauen".*

Francis X. Roth, O. S. A.

St. Rita's Monastery,
Racine, Wis.



Present Site of the First Catholic Orphan Asylum in the United States,
Sixth and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia

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+ Ioan. B. Neumann *W.R.*
Episc. Philad.



INTRODUCTION

HISTORY OF CATHOLIC CHILD WELFARE IN PHILADELPHIA PRIOR TO 1855 AND THE PART PLAYED THEREIN BY THE GERMAN CATHOLICS.

THE loving care devoted to the orphaned waif, the crippled child, and the whimpering foundling is a distinct achievement of Christianity. The Spartans killed the crippled or sickly child, and the Chinese expose the undesired child even in our own day. Our Redeemer taught His disciples to love the little ones because of the value of their immortal souls. His words "And he that shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me" (Matth. 18, 5) have for nearly two thousand years proved the strongest incentive to sacrifice the time, energy, and money which the care of the orphan entails.

In individual cases a kind family can often be found to care for a destitute child, but where such instances were numerous, e. g., in large cities, or after a devastating calamity, the founding of a home was always regarded as necessary to provide for the regular maintenance and proper education of the orphans..

ST. JOSEPH'S ORPHAN ASYLUM

The terrible plague of Yellow Fever, towards the end of the eighteenth century, led to the foundation of the first orphanage in the United States, St. Joseph's in Philadelphia, Sixth and Spruce Streets, erected in 1798. From August to November, 1796, Philadelphia, with a population of 50,000, lost 4041 by death; of this number 335 were Catholics. A renewed outbreak in 1798 claimed as its prey, 24% of all the inhabitants leaving behind a large number of orphans.

The helpless waifs of Catholic parents were cared for by several benevolent gentlemen who for this purpose bought a house on Front Street below Lombard. They placed a Mrs. Caney in charge of the Home. In the ensuing years the number of those who supported the Home steadily decreased thus making the continuance of the project very doubtful; however this danger was averted through the efforts of Rev. Michael Hurley, O. S. A., rector of St. Augustine's Church. Going from house to house and soliciting members who would be willing to make a definite yearly contribution, Father Hurley managed to keep the doors of the Home open. He continued this system of finance for several years, being generously assisted by a wealthy Catholic, Cornelius Tiers. To ensure a reliable working basis, "The Roman Catholic Society of St. Joseph's for the Maintenance and Education of Orphans" was founded December 18, 1807.

Prior to this event, Father Hurley had secured a house from the trustees of the German Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity

Parish. The trustees of this church also formed the first board of directors for the new home.

The management of the house, which in the beginning was entrusted to a group of Catholic women without any special training for their duties, proved unsatisfactory. Through the efforts of Father Hurley they were replaced by the Sisters of Charity from Emmitsburg. Joy and gratitude filled the heart of Mother Seton, their saintly foundress, that her young community was allowed to care for the little ones of Christ. On October 6, 1814, three sisters took charge of the orphanage. They found conditions far from ideal. According to their historian "they soon discovered that the children's clothes were in a deplorable condition, scarcely allowing a change; the number of beds did not provide one-half the needed accommodations; and the sanitary condition of the house was anything but inviting". In addition, a heavy debt rested on the place. Through great personal sacrifices of the sisters, these deplorable conditions were eventually remedied and the future made secure.

The Catholic parishes of Philadelphia — there were only five — gave their united support in this undertaking. Thus we find in 1824 the Rev. H. Roloff, pastor of Holy Trinity as chaplain; the Rev. Michael Hurley, O. S. A. as president, and a German, Mr. Oellers, was the treasurer for many years.

ST. JOHN'S ORPHAN ASYLUM

In the winter of 1829, St. Joseph's was so overcrowded that it could not accommodate the children of a few Irish families whose parents had died shortly after their arrival in America. The poorest people of St. John's parish, 13th & Chestnut Streets, took up a collection among themselves for the benefit of these unfortunates. However, when this sum was exhausted, they, in their distress, appealed for aid to their pastor, the Rev. J. H. Hughes, later the famous Archbishop of New York. Though himself a member of the Board of Managers of St. Joseph's, he purchased a house on Pine Street and later on Broad Street, and confided it also to the care of the Sisters of Charity. Father Hughes had always hoped that this Institution would be united with St. Joseph's after the latter had been enlarged. He made this offer publicly in "The Catholic Herald" March 13, 1834, in answer to a criticism against his foundation. However, he made the offer under the condition that his parish school for girls, comprising about 200 pupils of various denominations, should also be continued by the managers of St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum. In recognition of this burden assumed by the Orphanage, Father Hughes offered the newly acquired "Gothic Mansion", 13th Street below Chestnut Street, and whatever money had been given to St. John's, the joint value being estimated at \$10,000. This proposal was not found acceptable by St. Joseph's because of the entailed obligation. On the insistence of Father Hughes that the school was a vital necessity of his parish, the union was not effected. It was at this time that Father Hughes gave his Home the name "St. John's Orphan Asylum". Until then, it had borne the name of the streets on which it was lo-

cated. In the same year, 1834, he also obtained a charter for his institution.

The main sources of revenue for both institutions were the yearly contributions of the Orphan Societies connected with the Homes. The yearly "Charity Sermons" preached in the different churches of the city were also of great importance. Fairs were held only on a few occasions. Diocesan support was lacking at this time. The upkeep of the asylums throughout the United States was distinctly a matter of the parishes that founded them.

ST. VINCENT'S MALE ORPHAN ASYLUM

In the beginning, St. Joseph's as well as St. John's accepted both boys and girls which was against the established rule of the Sisters of Charity in France who did not accept boys. However, Mother Seton had the liberal views of the American, notwithstanding she disliked the education of boys and girls in the same house. The fact that both institutions were small, and as a consequence soon overcrowded, afforded an opportunity to accept girls only. Thus, in 1834, we find two orphanages for girls, but none for boys. The merit of founding in Philadelphia the first Catholic Orphan Asylum for boys was reserved for the pastor of Holy Trinity Church, the Rev. Francis Guth. On November 11, 1834, he published the following in "The Catholic Herald":

"The writer of this address respectfully informs the Catholics of Philadelphia that he has established an asylum for orphan boys, into which he has already received fifteen destitute children, whose age is from four to seven years. When he commenced this undertaking he was well aware of the popularity of such an institution in Philadelphia where two extensive Catholic establishments for female orphans have already been founded and maintained by the charity of its inhabitants, but where no similar institution for destitute orphan boys had previously existed. In common with his brethren in the ministry, frequently has he witnessed the distress and agony which was felt by the destitute widow, as she contemplated her helpless orphans, and seeing no prospect of being able to support or educate them, came to the ministers of religion to seek consolation and advice. In such circumstances it was no longer possible for him to tell these applicants the melancholy truth: 'We have no institution for orphan boys'. Confiding then on the inexhaustible goodness of Divine Providence, and in the well-known charity of the inhabitants of this city, so generously evinced on some recent occasions, he resolved to receive the little ones who cried for bread and had none who would break it to them. For this end he had laid the foundation of an institution, the want of which has been long felt and acknowledged. He trusts that the Catholics of this city will aid him in an undertaking which, as it is intended to be of universal utility, requires universal support.

"The smallest contribution will be gratefully received, and the combined exertions of many will, under the Divine benediction, render this infant institution an additional monument of their zeal and benevolence. The contributions of many members of Trinity Church congregation have already been received and the undersigned appeals with confidence to the members of the other Catholic congregations throughout the city. He is convinced that the Catholics of Philadelphia only wait an appeal to their charity in order to induce them to contribute to this most beneficent and very

important object. He has been much edified by the numerous and splendid evidences of Philadelphia charity, which he has witnessed, and he has been encouraged by the Right Rev. Dr. Kenrick to promote effectually the good work he has commenced. He appeals then with confidence to your liberality and feels himself emboldened when he pleads the cause of those little ones, toward whom Jesus Christ manifested such a tenderness and affection. It is not necessary for him to dwell longer on a subject which must address itself to the feelings of all, or to suggest the powerful motives supplied by religion. The Catholics of Philadelphia surely will not fail to profit by the opportunity of assisting the destitute orphan and thus become the happy instruments of God's bounty toward their fellow creatures."

F. Guth, Pastor of Holy Trinity.

Philadelphia, November 11, 1834.

P. S. — After the above had been written, so many were the applications for admission into the asylum that three distressing cases were judged to demand immediate assistance. The number of orphan boys has been increased to eighteen and another larger house has been rented in Spruce Street, opposite to Trinity Church, where we now are. Besides the ordinary subscription of twenty-five cents a month, any article of furniture or boys' clothing will be thankfully received. Contributions will be received by the subscriber and by the other Catholic Pastors of the City."

The new home received the name of "St. Vincent's Male Orphan Asylum", and in 1836 numbered thirty-one occupants. Due to his departure from Philadelphia in August of the same year, Father Guth proposed to the managers of St. Joseph's to restrict their orphanage to girls only, but to unite St. John's and St. Vincent's and to admit boys exclusively into St. John's. His proposal was accepted and thus the first St. Vincent's Home ceased to exist.

A GERMAN CATHOLIC ORPHAN ASYLUM

In the beginning, the care of the orphans was carried on by the united efforts of the Catholic parishes in Philadelphia. Regarding the care of boys, Holy Trinity, the only German Parish of the city, did pioneer work.

An unexpected influx of German immigrants in the middle of the last century brought about a change in these conditions. We read that 57,500 Germans arrived in 1846; their number increased to 215,009 in 1854. These immigrants were as a rule of the poorer classes with little more than the rudiments of an education. As was to be expected, their work for daily bread left them little opportunity of learning the English language. For this reason they desired to be able to converse with those to whom they entrusted their children. They also wished that the latter would learn or retain the mother-tongue. This explains sufficiently the acceptance of the plan for a Catholic German Orphan Asylum. One must not however, consider these as the sole factors.

During the years preceding 1845, there had been only a few Catholics among the German immigrants. One church, Holy Trinity, founded in 1789, sufficed to provide for the spiritual needs of the German Catholics. The second one, St. Peter's at Fifth Street and Girard Avenue, was founded in 1842, fifty-three years later. This church was to care for the Germans of the "Northern Liberties". The

years following 1845 saw a rapid increase in the number of German Catholics. In the extreme Northwestern part of the city, Manayunk, St. Mary's of the Assumption was founded in 1849. This was followed in 1853 by St. Alphonsus' in South Philadelphia. Due to a scarcity of priests, the North-Philadelphia German Catholics could not be provided with a priest who spoke their language.

St. Peter's was given in charge of the Redemptorists. The efforts of these pioneers in behalf of the German Catholics cannot be estimated too highly. In all the larger cities where these Fathers had parishes, they strove to make them complete. Besides church and school, they also erected their own orphanage and hospitals, together with a parish cemetery. Almost every orphan asylum for German speaking Catholics between 1840 — 1860 was the result of their zeal.

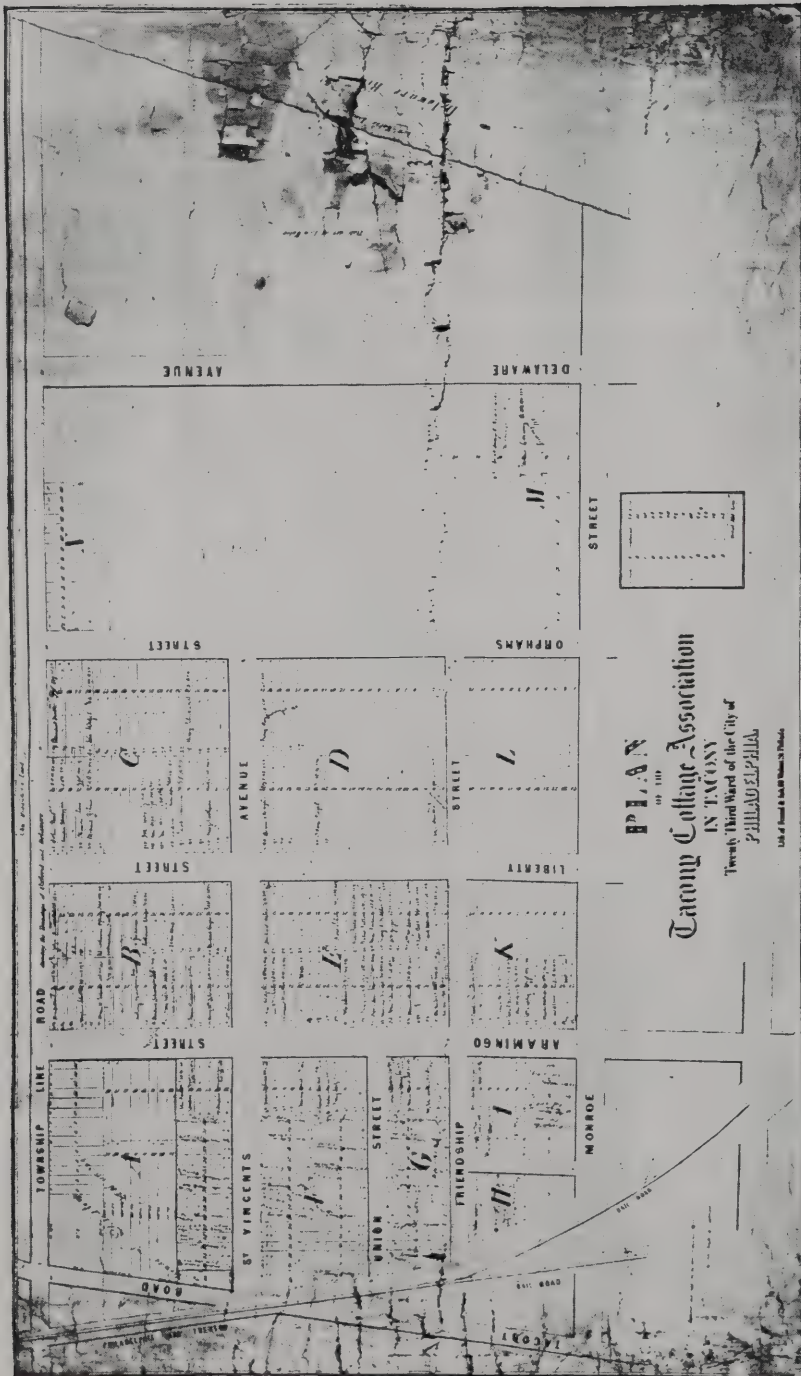
They built St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum in New York in 1851, the German Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum in Buffalo in 1852; St. Anthony's in Baltimore in 1852 and St. Joseph's in Rochester in 1861. This explains the similarity in the organization and regulation of these Homes. An additional reason is the fact that the School Sisters of Notre Dame from Munich had charge of these asylums. The first Superior General of America, the saintly and energetic Mother Caroline Friess, deserves special mention. She held the Redemptorists in the highest esteem and supported them to the full extent of her ability.

Among the Redemptorists themselves, the Rt. Rev. John Neumann, the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, is outstanding for his efforts in promoting Orphan Asylums for German speaking Catholics. The following letter, written as early as October 1841 to the Leopoldine Mission Society in Vienna, testifies to this zeal:

"Very often poor German parents give their small children to Americans who accept them gladly in order to bring them up as Protestants. This happens most frequently with newcomers. The same situation developed in times past with the French and Irish families, but the Bishops, recognizing the danger, established orphanages, under the care of the Sisters of Charity. These Sisters already number two hundred, and have seventeen Orphanages. Since these Orphanages were established by French and Irish Bishops, children of these nationalities get the preference. There should be several orphanages for the German children in order to save them, but the help for this work must come from Germany".

Another reason not to be ignored was that St. John's could accommodate no more orphans, because the German Immigration had been exceeded by the Irish, of whom 221,253 came in the year 1851.

As a summary, we may say the great number of German Immigrants with their ignorance of the English language and their desire to cultivate the mother tongue even in the new country; the duty of the Bishop to provide for the little ones of his flock; the influence of the Redemptorists and the overcrowding of St. John's, were the main reasons that led to the erection of a Catholic Orphanage for Germans in the Diocese of Philadelphia.



PART I.
THE BEGINNING (1856 — 1866)

CHAPTER I.
THE TACONY COTTAGE ASSOCIATION

THE House Chronicle of the Redemptorist Fathers at St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, reports under July 1855:

"There was in our Church and in Holy Trinity Church the St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum Society established to erect an Orphan Asylum. At first there was some opposition. That evening Father Klaholtz preached a very impressive sermon on the need of such institutions. A number of collectors were appointed. On the fifth Sunday of the month there was a meeting of the St. Vincent's Orphan Society which was very well attended. The collectors brought in \$55.00. Mr. L. Heyer, Mr. L. Koch and Charles Behlen were elected Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary respectively. The first meeting took place July 13, 1855".

September 23, 1855. — "The St. Vincent's Society is proceeding in a flourishing manner. They will soon get a charter from the court and will proceed to elect a Board of Managers. They intend, if possible, to buy a piece of land in the country".

October 1, 1855. — "The St. Vincent's Society had a meeting on this day after Vespers. The meeting was very well attended; almost every seat was taken. Great harmony prevailed. A committee of six was chosen to prepare and obtain a charter from the Court of Common Pleas. Next, six candidates were nominated, two of which were to be elected the following Sunday for the Board of Managers".

These are the first and only records we find dealing with the beginning of St. Vincent's Orphanage. They are supplemented by the original report in the first Minute Book:

"On October 8, 1855 the first Board of Managers of the St. Vincent's Society was elected. On the following day it met in the home of Henry Daudt on 5th Street above Wood Street, with the intention of electing its first officers. The meeting was attended by Father Peter Carbon of Holy Trinity Church and Rev. Lawrence Holzer of St. Peter's Church; Henry Daudt, Bernhard Huelsemann, and John Seiberlich of Holy Trinity Church; and Henry Schmidt, Michael Haas and Lawrence Heyer of St. Peter's Church. Through secret balloting the Rev. Peter Carbon was elected President; John Seiberlich as first and Henry Schmidt as second Vice-President; B. Huelsemann as Treasurer and Lawrence Heyer as Secretary".

Holy Trinity and St. Peter's were the only German parishes to participate in this undertaking. St. Alphonsus' had just been founded and was incapable of assisting because of its own debt. At St. Mary's, Manayunk, the same condition prevailed.

To realize its aim, the St. Vincent's Society chose a very modern means. The great consolidation of Philadelphia had taken place in 1854 under Mayor Conrad; this had a very favorable effect on real estate and gave birth to the following plan: Two farms

containing thirty-eight acres should be bought near Tacony at a cost averaging between sixteen and seventeen thousand dollars. Of these, twenty acres should be laid out in building lots. "By this speculation the eighteen remaining acres were to cost nothing to the Society and a profit of several thousand dollars made besides".

The land was acquired on October 3, 1855. According to the deeds "22 acres and 30 perches of fast land, 9 acres, 3 roods and 24 perches of the flats" were acquired from Richard Wigfall at a cost of \$8,700.00. Furthermore "17 acres of fast land and about six acres and 72 perches of the flats" were bought from George Knowles for \$6,200.00. An acre of fast land cost \$437.50, the mudflats being free. In January, 1856, an additional 10 acres adjoining the mentioned 39, were purchased from Wm. H. Gatzmer at the rate of \$450.00 per acre. The total cost for the 49 acres was \$19,400.00. The buyers were Bernhard Huelsemann, the soul of the entire undertaking, John Knoll and Francis Bierbreuer. The acquired property of the Association comprised all the land between the Pennsylvania Railroad (at that time the New York Trenton R. R.) on the west and the Delaware River on the east; Cottman Street (then Township-line Road) formed the northern boundary and Princeton Avenue (originally Monroe Street) the southern. The present Milnor Street bore the name Orphan Street; Wissinoming Street was known as Liberty Street and State Road as Aramingo Avenue. In July, 1930, St. Vincent's Street was changed to Wellington Street. Union and Friendship Streets retained their old names.

For the purpose of re-selling, the Tacony Cottage Association was established on November 1, 1855. It was in fact, merely a sub-committee of the Board of Managers, with its own cash and book-keeping. On November 5, 1855, the society received the deed to the property from Mr. Wigfall for \$1,007.00 in cash and a mortgage. The next day the first public sale of lots took place. 81 lots were sold for \$11,723.00. "Everybody was highly pleased", we read in St. Peter's House Chronicle. On the following Monday, November 12, the second public sale was held. "Though it was raining all day, \$8,593.00 were realized". After the third auction on Thanksgiving Day, November 22, the total number of lots sold was 200 leaving 75 lots. The total sum cleared amounted to \$29,000.00. On May 13 and July 4, 1856 two more auctions were held. The one in May netted \$2,426.00 for 12 lots. Mr. Behlen was the auctioneer. This public sale is of special interest because of its long and unique advertisement in the "Philadelphia Democrat" of May 10, 1856. Not only on account of the many new facts it reveals, but mostly because of its humorous character, we give a full translation:

"A large piece of land of 48 acres, was recently bought at Tacony, 23rd Ward, with the intention of using part of it as the site for a German Orphan Asylum. The remainder was divided into building lots, 20 feet broad, and 120 to 200 feet long; these shall be auctioned on Tuesday morning, March 13th, at 11 o'clock, on the place itself to the highest bidder. The land is to be had for a cheap price ranging from not more than \$90 to \$170; and after a year or two, it will be worth more than \$300 to \$400.

"Each buyer enjoys, also, the exceptional advantage that the terms do not burden him with any other trouble than a monthly payment of \$2 — \$4. You can find there also the most beautiful and most select river-cottage lots, that means building lots for pleasure-gardens and summer homes along the Delaware, each 50 feet wide and 200 feet long. Here one can finally create a second paradise on earth. Far from us be all cheating. Every gain that comes from the sale of these lots, will be used for the erection of an Orphan Asylum, School, etc. Therefore, the buyers have nothing to do with land-speculators, doing rather a good work out of which a great benefit will result for them and their families. The situation of the land is most beautiful, and very healthful. It offers a splendid view of the surrounding territory and the Delaware. This new settlement, with which every advantage is connected, is accessible at each hour of the day, by Railroad and by Steamboat, a depot and wharf being nearby. There is also a plankroad which will run through the streets of the town."

"PAY ATTENTION! The proprietor will be his own landlord, a very great advantage for the merchants and businessmen, whose health is worth thousands of dollars. They will do well to bring their whole family to this fine country town."

"Ye workingmen and citizens, go to Tacony on May 13, and the cramps caused by too much sitting will leave you forever. Ye all, who pay high rents in a silly corner of the city and breathe pestiferous air, soon losing dollars and life, come to Tacony!"

"Ye doctors, who have become the second nature of the present generation, but put the people under the earth many years too early with your sweet and sour quack-pills, go to Tacony! And if you are men of learning, you will soon discover where the salt- and sulphur-fountains are to be found, from which alone people can expect a natural restoration to health."

"Ye innkeepers, who have failed, go to Tacony likewise! Start gardening, and work that you won't get too fat. The land is very good, and the fruit of the smallest melon is much larger than that of the thickest and highest oak-tree. You need not wrap up sausages for the afternoon; Lagerbeer waits for you with a ready table. And finally, honest people only are invited, for then Tacony will always be free of lawyers. Do not forget May 13!"

This advertisement lets us clearly see the reasons for the strong participation. They were: cooperation in a great and necessary work of charity; quiet, healthful country life; good connections with the city; prospects of Church and School which would guarantee the education of the children; and finally the conviction that the lots bought could be resold in a short time with a considerable profit.

The buyers were, of course, chiefly members of the two German Parishes, since they were especially interested in the success of the undertaking. We see this from the fact that ninety-eight of the buyers of the first year, with the exception of nine, were Germans. This easily explains the old stock of German Catholic settlers in Tacony, which was later divided into "Irishtown" and "Dutchtown".

The settlement followed the plan laid out by a Mr. Saver (surveyor) of Frankford, who received \$55.00 for his services. He was ordered to lay out the land in six-cottage lots. A copy of the plan is still in possession of the Orphan Asylum (see page 18). The lots were as a rule 20 x 250 and sold at an average of \$120.00 each.

In the beginning of 1859, the value of the lots amounted to \$32,339. In addition to the property for the Orphanage, a number of

other lots were left, which were sold in part later on. The plan had been managed successfully with a net gain of \$10,739.00. However, as the buyers paid only in monthly rents of \$2.00 per lot, we find a "deficit" of \$4,144.00 for the year 1859.

The Association existed until 1886 and was then united with the Board of Managers of St. Vincent's. From the beginning it regularly turned its money over to the Board.

Besides making the beginning of the Home possible, the above mentioned land deals also influenced the further development of Tacony. From now on larger groups of settlers were attracted. Previously it had been occupied by a few Finnish and Swedish farmers. Extensive advertising by the Tacony Cottage Association helped to populate the section. However, this growth was somewhat retarded by the Civil War and the depression of 1872. Since then Tacony has been gradually prospering. Between 1872 and 1880, Disston built his large Saw Works. This undertaking was followed by various other industries located along the Delaware. The men employed by these industries were mostly Irish and settled, as a rule, between Torresdale Avenue and Penna. R. R.

After the World War, 1914—1918, the territory between Torresdale Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard enjoyed a boom period. Where there had once been only woods, swamps and ill-regulated creeks, one may now see well built streets lined with beautiful private houses. This transformation had also been brought about by Building Associations. However, the pioneer work was accomplished by the Tacony Cottage Association of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Tacony.

ORIGIN OF THE NAME TACONY

Amongst the old documents of the Orphan Asylum written in part upon fine leather, there is a "Brief of Title" which gives us a very interesting insight into the history of our section and our property.

In the patent of March 23, 1676, Sir Edmund Andros the Swedish Governor, gives Michel Fredericks three hundred acres of land between the land called "Pinnepakta" (now known as Pennypack) and "Towacanoinck". On Holme's Map drawn up for William Penn, 1683-84, "Towacanoinck" had already been shortened to "Towaconinck Township." It extended to Frankford Creek, including Mayfair and Wissinoming of today.

The Dutchmen, Jasper Daukers and Peter Sluyters, tell us in their diary of 1679: "And at dusk came to Taconig a village of Swedes and Finns situated on the west of the river." (Philadelphia History 1917, Vol. 1, p. 159).

In the case of Holme, we admire the scientific exactitude of his work. But the diary shows, how in the everyday language the difficult Indian name had been shortened very soon.

These are the only trustworthy documents we possess regarding the origin of the name "Tacony". All other attempts like trying to derive the name "Tacony" from an Indian chief "Taconyeli" are mere conjectures.

However, I do not know the Indian language and cannot prove the correctness of the statement that Tacony means "uninhabited land or forest" (thus Jackson in Philadelphia Year-Book for 1919).

CHAPTER II.

THE BUILDING OF ST. VINCENT'S

THE unexpected and good results of the first land auctions had made it possible to begin building operations immediately. The saintly Bishop of the Diocese, John Neumann, took a lively interest in the project. He sent for the Board of Managers to discuss under what conditions the Church and Orphan Asylum of Tacony should be built and governed. This interest grew out of his conviction of the necessity of a German Orphan Asylum. However, he had another important pastoral reason. Between St. Dominic's Church in Holmesburg and St. Joachim's Church in Frankford, there was no other Catholic Church. The German Catholics of Bridesburg, about 300 in number, had frequently stressed the necessity of a German-speaking priest. Therefore, the erection of St. Vincent's Church would prove a happy solution for this double problem, since it was located between the other two parishes and its German pastor could provide for the needs of the German Catholics in the Northeast.

The solemn ceremony of ground breaking took place on November 20, 1856. Originally the Board had decided on November 26, but Bishop Neumann requested the ceremony to be held on Thanksgiving Day, November 20. Thus the immediate beginning of St. Vincent's was planned by a Saint, for whom this day must surely have been one of thanksgiving and joy.

Of this event only a few details are known. According to a number of advertisements in the "Philadelphia Democrat" the celebration took place at 11 o'clock in the morning. The name of Bishop Neumann heads the Committee. Judging from the collection, which amounted to \$49.06, it seems that the attendance was poor.

Influenced by the ideas of the old country, the Board of Managers did not immediately plan the erection of a large building, but rather restricted its size in proportion to the funds on hand. An appeal was also made from the pulpits for gratuitous labor. Due to a lack of response, the Board of Managers in December 1856 requested the members of St. Peter's and Holy Trinity Churches to submit estimates for excavating. The contract was given to John Herold, at the rate of 25 cents per cubic yard, in January 1857. William Lott was engaged as bricklayer receiving \$2.25 for laying 1000 bricks. The bricks were bought from Webster in Bridesburg, costing \$5.75 per 1000 and by August 1857, 200,000 bricks had to be delivered. For roofing, slate was decided upon. The contract for plastering was given out in April and for painting in July 1858. The House Chronicle of St. Vincent's gives us the only available description of the first structure:

FOUNDERS OF ST. VINCENT'S ORPHAN ASYLUM



Rev. Peter Maria Carbon,
† October 19, 1871

Rev. Lorenz Holzer, C. SS. R.,
† December 27, 1876

"The building was 40 x 41 feet, three stories high besides a basement which served as a kitchen and refectory. The first floor contained the chapel with two rooms serving as parlor and classroom. The second floor was occupied by the priest of the Asylum. The bedrooms and infirmary were on the third floor. Two rooms in the attic were vacant."

It took almost a year and a half to erect this small southern wing. The delay was apparently due to the depression of 1857. Fortunately the panic was shortlived, making a picnic on a larger scale possible in July 1858. Two thousand tickets at 15 cents and 500 at 5 cents were printed. The financial results amounted to \$228.00. No doubt this "party" substituted for the cornerstone-laying, otherwise the celebration of the Silver Jubilee in 1883 could not be explained satisfactorily.

The new orphanage began its mission of Charity with eleven children and three sisters. However, the number of orphans increased threefold within the first nine months. This fact, together with an unabated influx of immigrants, demanded the completion of the entire building. Through some misfortune, the plans have been lost. "The Catholic Herald" of July 21, 1860, alone refers to this fact.

"The Managers of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Tacony, have commenced the work of enlarging their building, and they hope to have the whole of the intended addition under roof before winter sets in. The present building is 40 feet square, containing a basement, three stories, and an attic story and is at present occupied by the Sisters and Orphans to its fullest capacity.

"The contemplated addition, will be in length 80 feet making the entire building, when finished 120 feet long. The central part of the building for a length of 40 feet, will project at each side some 15 feet making the ground plan of the building to resemble a cross of 120 by 70 feet.

"The two ends or wings will contain the same number of stories as before described, and the central part rising one story higher will contain the school rooms; the Chapel 70 feet by 40 feet and 20 feet in the clear; two dormitories 70 by 40; attic 70 by 40; and cells for the Sisters.

"In the center will be a campanile or bell tower covered with a dome and cross, rising over the roof 30 feet and above the ground 93 feet.

"The building will be of brick with circular headed windows with brown stone sills. It is placed lengthwise to the river and turnpike, and will present a striking and handsome appearance when viewed from either side.

"The plans were made by J. T. Mahony, architect, who is to superintend the building. Our readers will judge from the above description of the building and its great size, that notwithstanding every economy as regards workmanship will be carefully attended to, its cost will be very great and it is hoped that the Catholics of the city will subscribe in aid of its speedy completion".

The structure progressed rapidly permitting the corner-stone laying on August 15, 1860. This ceremony was attended by several priests. The Rev. Peter Carbon preached in English and Father Dausch, C. SS. R., in German. The collection amounted to \$70.75. In April 1861 the centre wing was completed with the exception of the tower; but a bell donated by Mr. B. Huelsemann and Mr. Persch was immediately installed. Services were held for the first time in

the new chapel on Pentecost Monday, May 20, with ten orphans receiving their first Holy Communion. "The tower was completed in the winter of 1864 by the carpenter Quick and his sons. It cost over \$600.00. The church pews which had been bought a few years before, were placed in the chapel and painted by Mr. Zahn. In 1866, the carpenter, Mr. Bielefeld, completed the northern wing. Since that time the boys and girls have been separated, the stairs of the northern wing being for the boys."

Both groups however, were together in the refectory, which was still in the basement. Another very small adjoining room served as dining room for the sisters. The chapel occupied the entire wing and extended to the third floor. This floor contained the dormitory for the boys; that of the girls was on the floor above. The former chapel in the southern wing was successfully converted into a school and later a playroom for the babies, who had their bedroom in the attic of the same wing. The second floor served as working room for the girls. In the northern wing, the first floor contained the classrooms, the second floor the living room for the boys and the third another dormitory for the same.

Towards the end of the year 1866, there were 131 children in the home under the care of four sisters and five candidates.

FINANCING OF THE NEW BUILDING

As the ordinary income of the orphanage by no means sufficed to cover the cost of this new building, the Board resorted to extraordinary means. Through the written and spoken word, they created interest and opened sources of revenue. With the laying of the corner stone subscription lists were opened. The ledger of 1858 — 1865 (R 3) gives us many interesting details on this subject, among which are:

St. Peter's Church Subscription for the Building.

August 1860	\$1,417.00*
September 1860	300.00
October 1860	422.00
Smaller amounts	323.00
	<hr/>
	\$2,462.00

Holy Trinity Church Subscription in 1860 \$616.00.

During the winter months, balls and concerts were held. Mr. Spiel, leader of St. Peter's choir, arranged the first concert, held in the National Guards Hall in 1861. The receipts for the Concert of Holy Trinity Church in 1862 amounted to \$484.31. Among the balls the "Friendship Ball" became a yearly event. In April 1861 it netted \$708.00. An old tradition even says that the House of Representatives in Harrisburg closed earlier than usual to participate in one of these affairs, but no proof of it can be found.

*The larger amount of August 1860 is probably the work of Rev. Fehlings, C. SS. R., who took up a house to house collection. (Byrne, p. 181).

During the summer time there were great excursions. The same ledger tells us:

Proceeds of Holy Trinity Church Excursion in 1862	\$ 829.24
Proceeds of St. Peter's Church Excursion in 1862	804.04
Proceeds of St. Peter's Church Excursion in 1863	919.41
	<hr/>
	\$2,552.69

Even the German congregations outside of Philadelphia contributed their share. Thus we read of collections for the Home in Easton, Lebanon, Williamsport and other cities.

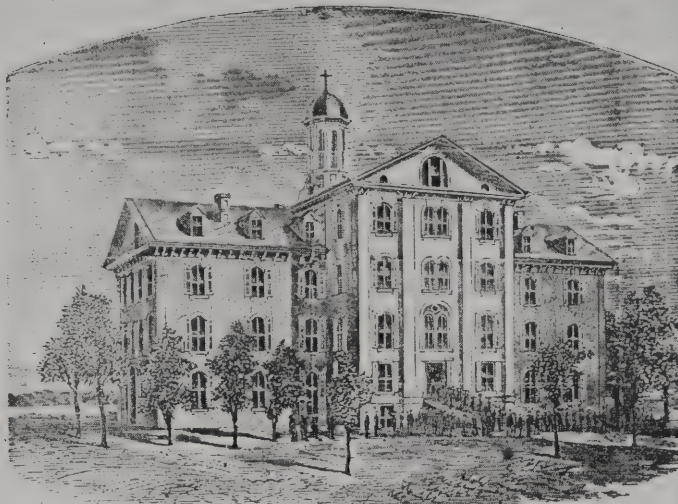
If we consider the conditions of the time, one is surprised at the amounts that were given. The above mentioned sums totaled \$6,793.00. How much sacrificial spirit and enthusiasm those old Germans had for "their Orphan Asylum".

The Diocese also extended a helping hand, Bishop Wood lent \$4,400.00.

Today, it is impossible to give a complete account of the cost of the building. We know nothing of the outlay for the southern wing except the price of some building material. However, \$10,695.00 had been spent at the time when the centre wing was finished. Regarding the northern wing the books show an expenditure of only \$692.00; the architect's fees were \$135.00. This gives an approximate cost of \$12,000.00. It is very improbable that the building cost more.

For a long time it was the most beautiful building in Tacony. It was built in that type of Renaissance style which at that time was mostly used by Napoleon LeBrun, the leading architect of the city.

To the present time the building has undergone very few changes. The most important was, that the two stairways which had been leading through the centre of the building were removed and erected as outside fire towers in 1915 and 1919. They, as well as the sacristy which was placed between the two fire towers in 1927, have contributed little to the beauty of the building but have done much to increase comfort and security.



St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Tacony.

This Institution is beautifully located at Tacony, on the Delaware River, about six miles east of the city of Philadelphia. It was established by the German Roman Catholic School Society of Philadelphia and its vicinity, which was organized by Rev. Holzer, of St. Peter's Church, in Philadelphia, in the year 1855, and incorporated February 29th, 1856.

The first President of this Society was Rev. P. M. Carbon, pastor of the Church of the Most Holy Trinity, in Philadelphia. Vice-President, Rev. Kleineidam, Rector of St. Peter's Church; Treasurer, B. H. Hulseman; Secretary, George Ruks. Members: Henry Daudt, Johann Knoll, John Seiberlich, E. Behlen.

The building is constructed of bricks, and consists of a centre edifice 40 by 70 feet, with two lateral wings 40 by 41 feet, and is four stories high besides the basement. In 1857 the south wing was erected and in 1860 the centre and north wing. It has capacity for the accommodation of 250 children. Both sexes are admitted. Boys remain until the age of twelve, girls until eighteen years. The children are instructed in the branches of a good elementary education—English and German, and industrial work.

This institution is supported by the above named society and donations, and conducted by the School Sisters de Notre Dame. Since its organization 673 children have been admitted, 403 boys, 270 girls. Seventeen soldiers' orphans have been maintained and educated at the expense of the State. It contains at present 135 inmates—80 boys, 55 girls. Of these 28 are under five years of age.

The present Board of Managers consists of:

REV. GEORGE SNEY, Rector at St. Peter's Church, President.	
REV. H. SCHICK, pastor of the Church of the Most Holy Trinity,	} Vice-Presidents.
REV. E. HILTERMANN, pastor of St. Bonifacius Church,	
JACOB KIRCHEN, Esq., Treasurer.	
JOSEPH LEIBRAND, Secretary.	

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD:

Ludwig Koch, Martin Thomas, Seb. Heer, Jacob Michel, Christian Krimm, Joseph Schachte, Frank Bellowoar, John Witzel, Joseph Schnitzius, Henry Jung, C. Dubler, Anton Herrmann.

April 1876

CHAPTER III.

ST. VINCENT'S SPIRITUAL STRUCTURE

THE home had now been built; but after all, the building was only the shell, and as such, cannot be the chief object of our interest. Just as in a man we admire more the strongly pulsating life, the gifts of mind, the high quality of his character rather than the mere external appearance, so also every charitable institution has its own distinguishing character. Among them we find rich and poor, modest citizens and noble aristocrats; homes which are never affected by depression and others which react sharply to each economic change. What is the character of St. Vincent's in this respect? We can glean it from its special spiritual structure which consists in its constitution, in its government and direction, in its helpers and friends, in its inmates and their way of living.

THE BOARD OF MANAGERS

Like the constitution of our country so is the constitution of St. Vincent's democratic. It is regulated by the charter, which was approved by the State of Pennsylvania on November 19, 1855, and begins:

"We, the subscribers, citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, being desirous to associate ourselves together for the purpose of forming a society for the moral and scientific education of children chiefly of German origin, and to acquire and enjoy the powers and immunities of a corporation, or body politic in law, do adopt the following articles and conditions...."

There is no mention made whatsoever in the charter concerning the education of orphans; not even the name of the corporation expresses it; this latter being, the "German Roman Catholic St. Vincent's School Society of Philadelphia and its vicinity". This title was discarded in 1877 for "German Roman Catholic St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum of Philadelphia and its vicinity". Its present name, "St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum of Tacony, Philadelphia" dates back to 1890. These changes were chiefly made to secure the advantages of new state laws. In its contents the charter underwent only one essential change in 1889. It was reformulated by J. Peter Klinges, Esquire, who was for many years attorney of the orphanage. It clarified the charter considerably and was a decided improvement upon the original one. This second charter is divided into seven articles and seventeen by-laws.

According to this constitution, all power rests with the Board of Managers. The Board transacts all business and decides on the erection of new buildings and improvements. It regulates the admission and dismissal of children, their care and upkeep. The election to this Board takes place in the following manner. The pastors of the Ger-

man Roman Catholic Congregations of the Most Holy Trinity, of St. Peter's, of St. Alphonsus', and of St. Boniface's in Philadelphia, are ex officio members of the Board of Managers; each of these pastors appoints a manager from among the lay members of his congregation. The branches of the St. Vincent's Orphan Society (see p. 36) established within these four parishes elect by ballot two members each. No person is eligible, who is not a practical Catholic, and also a member of the St. Vincent's Orphan Society. The Board of Managers, accordingly, is composed of sixteen members: four priests and twelve laymen. These sixteen members elect among themselves, by ballot, the president, three vice-presidents, a treasurer; the Most Reverend Archbishop of Philadelphia, is Honorary President of this governing body.

From its members, the Board appoints three committees, one for finances, a house committee, and an orphan committee, each consisting of four men. The Committee for Finance superintends and promotes the financial interest of the corporation. The House Committee provides for necessary food and clothing, the furnishings of the asylum and the care of the necessary repairs and improvements. However, expenditures exceeding the sum of \$50.00 must first be approved by the Board of Managers. The Orphans Committee decides upon the admission of children and provides for them after their dismissal.

This second constitution is still binding and differs from the first mainly in one point, namely, the corporation should exclusively be composed of members of the four above mentioned German parishes, whereas the first constitution had given equal rights to every German Roman Catholic congregation in which the Orphan Society was formed. This was changed in 1887. No reasons for this change are given in the minute book.

In 1903, Father Hubert Hammeke, rector of St. Bonaventura's Church obtained the right of sending a representative to the Board Meetings. The same right was extended in 1906 to Father Deham, pastor of All Saints. Since then both parishes have become members of the St. Vincent's Orphan Society. St. Ignatius joined in 1907 and was followed by Our Lady Help of Christians in 1908 and St. Henry's in 1919.

The names of the members of the first Board of Managers have already been enumerated (page 19). B. Huelsemann was a hide and leather dealer; John Seiberlich was a tailor and his brother Anthony had a large shoe store; Lawrence Heyer was a morocco dresser. Huelsemann and Seiberlich were the only Board members who served for a longer term. Huelsemann, who was the treasurer, was without doubt, the hardest worker. Since there was no House Committee at that time, he did all this kind of work alone. He settled in Tacony before 1865, but later moved to Oil City, Pa. In recognition of his efforts, he was the only one who by a special resolution of the Board, was honored with a personal invitation to the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the Home. More details are known of the first priests on the Board of Managers.

Rev. Peter Maria Carbon

Father Peter Maria Carbon, the first President of the Orphanage, was born August 4, 1822 in Eschweiler (Kreis Zabern, Alsace). He made his preparatory studies at Nancy, Alsace, and after their completion came to Philadelphia. Received by Bishop Kenrick into the Theological Seminary of St. Charles Borromeo (then at 18th and Race Streets), he was ordained January 7, 1849 in the Cathedral of St. John's, Philadelphia. His first mission was as pastor to St. John's, Pottsville. From there he was transferred in July 1850 to the pastorate of St. Peter's, Reading, Pa., and four years later was placed in charge of Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia, where he labored until his death, seventeen years later.

"All who knew Father Carbon justly esteemed him as a man of untiring energy, incessant zeal, strict discipline and exemplary bearing, but withal, kind, genial, amiable. He never tired in administering to the wants of his people, and the good which he wrought during his pastorate at Holy Trinity, cannot be chronicled in earthly records". It is of such men, that we expect the foundation of great works of charity like that of our Orphanage. Another outstanding deed of his life was that he abolished the trustee election system of Holy Trinity, which for many years had fettered the parish with slavish chains. Father Carbon accomplished this by a master stroke of policy in having an amendment added to the charter to the effect that the trustees should no longer be elected by the members of the congregation but be appointed by the Bishop.

In his work for the Orphan Asylum, he showed the same systematic and unremitting care which his biographer eulogizes. He attended every meeting of the Board and opened each with prayer. Every record of the minutes bears his name, and almost every page of the ledger reports a present from him. He died on October 19, 1871, leaving as a final gift all his personal possessions to the orphanage. By order of the Board of Managers, twenty-eight orphans were taken to Holy Trinity Church to attend the funeral of their first President. Ever since, it has been customary to perform this same act of gratitude for all deceased benefactors. His remains rest in Holy Trinity Cemetery. The monument can be seen in the picture, page 10.

Rev. Lawrence Holzer, C. SS. R.

Father Carbon's religious co-worker on the Board, Rev. Lawrence Holzer, was born September 17, 1819, in Minteraching, Bavaria. His father, a brewer, sent the talented boy to the Theological Seminary in Ratisbon. Having completed his studies, he was admitted to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in the famous place of pilgrimage in Bavaria, Altoetting. On November 1, 1844 he made his profession and was ordained priest on May 17, of the following year. His eloquence soon attracted attention. The activities of the Redemptorists being restricted by the Government, Father Holzer requested to be sent to America, where there was dire need of German priests. After a long and dangerous journey of 81 days, Father Holzer arrived in the States on March 17, 1847. Here he found

a fertile field for his missionary zeal, preaching practically in every large city. Later he held the office of Rector in Rochester, N. Y., Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore. In every city in which he was stationed as Superior, he left a lasting memorial of his zeal. In Baltimore he built St. Michael's and completed St. James' Church. In Pittsburgh he collected funds for the erection of a new orphan asylum after the old one had been destroyed by fire in 1852. There he also founded a Catholic daily "Der Republikaner" which existed for many years. In New York he founded the "New Yorker Presse". Like Venerable Bishop Neumann, he was also interested in botany and in his free time made some valuable collections. One plant discovered by him bears his name, the "Holzeriana".

We can readily see how manifold Father Holzer's activities were and among these, St. Vincent's is by no means the least important. His previous experience in work for the orphans, made him a valuable member of the first Board of Managers. No doubt, he supplied the plan for the organization of the orphanage. However, he not only gave the guiding line but also took an active interest in their realization even to details. This we see from reports of the first ledger where mention is made that Father Holzer often paid bills, and bought necessary equipment ranging from straw mattresses (strohsaecke) for the children, to a canopy for the chapel. He also negotiated larger loans for the erection of the Home. Father Holzer died on December 27, 1876 in Rochester, N. Y. (Obituary in "Nord-Amerika" January 13, 1877).

Father Carbon held the presidency at least until 1860. In 1871 he is recorded as Vice-President. Father Holzer was succeeded in the rectorship of St. Peter's by Rev. Anthony Urbanczek (1861 — 1863). Father Luehrmann was appointed Superior from 1863 to 1865. In 1863 he is mentioned as President of the Orphanage, probably following Father Carbon. Since then the Rector of St. Peter's has always been elected President. This is explained by the fact that St. Peter's as the largest and most resourceful German Catholic parish of the city, could more ably than any other congregation assist St. Vincent's both in financial and spiritual matters. Thus, whenever a priest was needed in the asylum during the months of a vacancy, St. Peter's would supply him.

SISTERS IN CHARGE

Apart from the work of the Managers, one must distinguish the immediate management of the Home, that is, the every day supervision, education and physical care of the children. This work was done by Sisters from the very beginning, although how difficult it was at that time to procure Sisters, especially German Sisters, we see from a resolution of the Managers in January 1859, appointing a committee "to look for a gardener and a capable woman to conduct the Orphan Asylum as soon as the orphans arrived". Fortunately, at the last minute, the help of the Franciscan Sisters, who had been founded by Bishop Neumann but four years previously in St. Alphonsus Parish, was obtained. It was their first undertaking of this kind.

Their annals tell us, that they assumed charge of St. Vincent's at the urgent request of Rev. Peter Carbon, the president of the Institution. The first Superior General, Mother M. Frances, sent the following three sisters on February 28, 1859: Sister Bernardine, superior; Sister Angela and Sister Agnes. The latter was to be the famous Superior General, Mother Agnes, who in 1859 was still a young sister, having made her first profession in the same year. These sisters remained only nine months, being recalled on December 6, 1859.

A number of reasons given for their withdrawal in the recently published histories of the Franciscan Sisters do not seem to correspond with the facts as found in the original documents. The deciding factor may be found in the Annals of Glen Riddle, where we read: — "On account of its close proximity to the Delaware River the house was at times flooded and poor sanitation rendered the place damp and unhealthful. The children became the prey of many infectious diseases from which the sisters themselves were not immune". The fact that the Community had been but recently established (in 1855) and the sisters having had little experience in this work, added to the existing difficulties. Therefore, Mother General, found it imperative to withdraw the sisters. "Not a little disheartened, we may believe, from the necessity of having to abandon their charges to whom contact of nearly a year had endeared them, the sisters left for the motherhouse". The weather was in harmony with their feeling, "for that day a severe thunderstorm with the rain pouring down in torrents broke upon the lonely travelers as they were returning from Tacony" on St. Nicholas Day of 1859.

On the same day three School Sisters of Notre Dame arrived accompanied by Mother Mary Weinzierl, one of the co-foundresses of the Congregation. Of the three sisters, Sister M. Gabriele Fuessenich was named Superior; Sister M. Catherine the cook; the third Elizabeth Schandell, was a candidate. Father Holzer as representative of the Board installed the sisters in their new home. From the very first day, these sisters kept an excellent House Chronicle which is of great importance for the inner history of the home. It is now a stately volume of over 500 folio pages. The description of the condition they found in the Home as given on the first page could not be more pathetic.

"The number of orphans was ten girls and seventeen boys, of whom thirteen were suffering from a skin disease over the whole body. The furnishing was meager in every way. Cotton was used instead of linen on the altar. The children had no clothes for a change, only one suit which they wore. In school there were only three decent school benches; in the parlor, four simple green chairs; rough boards served as tables in the kitchen. The institution owns about thirty acres of land; an old block house in which the gardener Wetter and his wife are living; a stable and a barn; three cows and about twenty chickens for which the gardener has to provide".

The high standards of today were unknown at that time. Yet even to these pioneer sisters, hardened by many sacrifices, the con-

ditions were anything but satisfactory and were only improved after the first visit of the American Superior General of the Notre Dame Sisters, Mother Caroline Friess, one of the greatest sisters in American history. She came during Lent, 1860, and remained several days during which "she regulated many things".

"Linen was bought for the altar. Through the Board, material for clothes was obtained and a seamstress employed.... On the Holy Feast of Easter the children for the first time wore their new clothes, and by order of Rev. F. Holzer went to St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, under the supervision of Rev McNaughton and two candidates. The following Sundays they went to Holy Trinity and St. Alphonsus Churches* The children afflicted with sickness were cured through the medical help of Dr. Tietmann, washing and unremitting care" (HC).

Since their arrival the School Sisters of Notre Dame have faithfully served the Home, bringing innumerable sacrifices. However, the conditions which they found were a source of constant worry and of many sleepless nights in the future. Only modern plumbing, canalization and drainage of the Home gradually brought relief.

As a remuneration for their services, the sisters received free board and a yearly salary of \$90 for each sister. A receipt for the year 1878 shows, that nine sisters received \$153 for three months, which is a little over \$5 per sister for a month.

Sister Regina Bilz

Due to serious illness, the first superior, Sister M. Gabriele remained only until April 1862. Sister Salesia filled the vacancy until September 1862, and was succeeded by Sister Coelestina, who remained in office until April 1863. In the same month Sister M. Regina Bilz was appointed; she guided the destinies of the home until 1896. Sister Regina represents the type of the pioneer sisters. Being strong and of large physique she was able to work incessantly. The late night often saw her still sewing for the orphans; other duties had occupied her during the day. Never trained in higher learning, she excelled in childlike piety. Several miraculous instances are reported in her time which we give in the final chapter. Her motherly direction created a homelike atmosphere in St. Vincent's, which often called the alumni back to the place, where they passed the time of their childhood. The outstanding characteristic of Sister Regina was her love for the babies; day and night she took personal charge of them.

Sister Regina enjoyed for many years, from 1859 — 1893, the faithful assistance of Sister Catherine Sugg, the cook; of Sister Virgilia Stratmann, who for thirty-four years, 1862 — 1896, had charge of the school; and of Sister Romana Gerlach, who for twenty-nine years, 1864 — 1893 cared for the boys. Each sister in turn was assisted by a number of candidates, who, however, were transferred every year, since after their candidacy they left to enter the Novitiate. Since 1900, only professed sisters have been sent out.

*On these days the children took up collections for the Orphanage. This custom continued until 1891 when it was discontinued. Modern sentiment had turned against it.

THE FIRST ORPHANS

Before the Tacony Cottage Association was formed in order to build a German Orphan Asylum, the School Sisters of Notre Dame at St. Peter's had opened a boarding school, in which they kept according to their House Chronicle of 1854, nine pupils (Zöglinge) and eight orphans. As soon as the St. Vincent's Orphan Society was established it paid for the upkeep of these orphans as the first Record shows in several passages. Still today, a house on Fifth Street, near the convent of St. Peter's, is called the "Orphanage". This proves again, how well established tradition often is, even if none of the present generation can give a reason for the same. After the opening of St. Vincent's, these children were of course transferred to the new orphanage.

A short article in the "Katholische Kirchenzeitung" of Baltimore, March 17, 1859, is the only report we possess referring to the opening of St. Vincent's.

"Tacony is steadily more blessed, for on the second of this month the first orphans arrived. They had lost both father and mother. Our hearts were deeply moved as we welcomed the little ones and thought of the words of Jesus: 'He who receiveth such a little one in My name, receiveth Me'. Today during the address of the chaplain all eyes were moist and everyone prayed to the Father of Light for His blessing upon the splendid Orphan Asylum".

Eleven orphans, five girls and six boys, ranging from three to nine years, entered St. Vincent's on this memorable day. They were the first of many thousands that were to follow them in years to come.

Child welfare of that time was still in the initial period. A selection and separation of children was yet unknown. For this reason we find in St. Vincent's, babies of only a few months, idiots, and cripples. Amongst the babies were many foundlings. Sister Regina, the superior, took care of them with motherly love. But despite the efforts of the sisters the death rate among them was high, a general experience of these years.

The following is but one case to illustrate with what difficulties the sisters had to contend.

"Anna Schickel was one of the first eleven orphans admitted. She died in her fourteenth year. During the preceding ten years she had been suffering continually and could walk only on crutches. When fourteen, her entire body began to swell and three large ulcers broke open, yet she was not sent to a hospital".

How much work and sacrifice is not contained in these few words of the House Chronicle.

FINANCIAL SOURCES

The building was completed and occupied. But whence came the funds with which to meet the regular expenses of feeding and clothing the orphans, of light and coal, of salaries for priests, sisters and employees. The Home has never been rich. It has never possessed great funds. It was built upon a more solid foundation, upon Catholic Charity. Its income was secured by the donations from numerous people. Three groups deserve special mention.

St. Vincent's Orphan Society

There is first of all, the St. Vincent's Orphan Society, which originally had been introduced into all German Parishes. It still exists. The membership dues have never changed. It is \$3.00 per year or 25 cents per month. The contributions were, as a rule, gathered up by the solicitors, collecting them from house to house. This tiresome work which was done without any recompense, has always been carried on willingly throughout the past seventy-five years. Many of the collectors have done this work for decades, thus, the yearly report of 1891 mentions the death of Mr. Ludwig Koch. "He was a co-founder, a collector for thirty-three, and a director of the institution for many years". He died at the age of eighty-two.

No one has done more for the Orphan Asylum than this society, though in 1903, it found a keen rival in "The Ladies' Aid Society". The St. Vincents' Orphan Society kept interest alive and acquainted the people with the work of the past and with the problems of the future. It directed all outside affairs for the benefit of the home for the first fifty years. It is the real owner of the Orphanage and shapes its destiny because from this society the members of the Board of Managers are elected.

In the beginning the monthly contribution of the Society did not amount to more than \$55.00; this would suggest a membership of about 200. In 1900, it had increased to about 700, and the yearly report of 1928 records 589 members. The words of the 24th annual report (1883) are still true: "The St. Vincent's Orphan Society is one of the principal sources of revenue for the institution. Though its extension this year gives cause to rejoice, nevertheless it is not what it should be. As a charitable organization it should grow and be represented in every parish, yes, in every family".

German Parishes

Of equal, or perhaps of even greater financial importance for the Home, we must consider the German parishes. The German pastors made use of the privilege to give the money for dispensations to the Home instead of to the Chancery Office. They also took up a monthly collection for the orphans. St. Alphonsus' parish participated for the first time on September 27, 1859. Its collection amounted to \$9.15; the first collection of St. Mary's, Manayunk, on March 26, 1861 netted \$35.32. St. Alphonsus' has cooperated regularly since 1860.

The first collections were as follows:

	St. Peter's	Holy Trinity	St. Alphonsus
1859	\$ 612.69	\$ 341.87	\$ 9.15
1860	1,260.20	336.77	188.76
Special Coll. 1860 ..	360.00	71.32	41.25
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$2,262.89	\$749.96	\$239.16

If we add the sums on other occasions in these few years, one will see that the German Parishes have contributed their full share, financially, in caring for the orphans.

Parents

A third source of income was the contributions made by the surviving parents, who committed their children to the home. The Orphanage based its stand on the principle that parents are appointed by God to provide for the education of their children and they should never forget this obligation. As a rule they paid about \$4.00 a month for a child. If we are not mistaken they also had to provide for the clothing.

If a parish, other than the German ones mentioned above, placed a child in the orphanage, it had to pay for the child's board. Thus several times we find entries such as — "for the children of St. Augustine's Church \$40.," and the Book of Admissions notes for the year 1864, "Rev. P. Bally, S. J., will take up an annual collection for this child" (Maria Treutter). Both her parents had died.

The whole income of the first six years, beginning 1859, was \$50,471.43 and the total expenses amounted to \$48,098.44.

Benefactors

Besides the regular income, St. Vincent's also depended on the generosity of beneficent friends, the first one mentioned is Mr. Adam Glass. Though never a member of the Board of Managers, his love for the orphans manifested itself in his many sacrifices in their behalf. He is mentioned for the first time in 1863 and from then on he is mentioned almost every year in the House Chronicle until his death. The following are just a few examples: "Mr. Glass gave very good material for boys' clothes, and calico for girls' clothing, besides white muslin". "Mr. Glass gave 120 blankets, two barrels of sweet potatoes and eight dozen towels". (1870). The following year he donated sufficient material to clothe the 104 inmates of the Home. In 1872 he donated besides many other useful things 70 pairs of shoes for boys, 48 pairs for girls. In 1879 he fitted out 17 children for their first Holy Communion. One sees that the sisters must have turned to him in all their troubles. We can readily understand why the news of his death was received with general and sincere sorrow, and why the Redemptorist Fathers, making an exception to their general rule, preached a funeral sermon as they had already done for his wife. Mr. Glass is an honor to German Catholicism in Philadelphia, and should never be forgotten. It is a pity that more detailed information of men and women of this type has not come down to us since the principal records of these years have been lost, and the House Chronicle mentions only those who worked directly with the sisters. Yet even if the books should never be found again, their names are written in the Book of Life. There is One who knows all their names and each single good work they performed and "who will reward them according to their works".



CHAPEL OF ST. VINCENT'S ORPHAN ASYLUM

CHAPTER IV.

THE CRADLE OF CATHOLICITY IN TACONY

St. Vincent's as a Parish, 1858 — 1879

THE Tacony Cottage Association had promised its buyers the erection of a church in which they could attend services and hear sermons given in their mother-tongue. The fulfillment of that promise meant the end of a period of great hardship for the settlers. Until then they were obliged to fulfill their religious duties at St. Peter's Church about nine miles distant. As a rule, they started at three o'clock in the morning. Only when the weather was bad did they attend services at St. Dominic's in Holmesburg, which was but a half hour distant. We can imagine their joy on beholding the walls of their new church rising in 1857. The building was not yet painted, the orphans had not yet arrived, when the first Sacrifice of the Mass was offered in what is now the Board Room. Under these conditions, Father Meurer celebrated his first Mass at St. Vincent's in 1858.

Until the beginning of St. Leo's in 1884, St. Vincent's Chapel was the only Catholic Church in Tacony. Until 1908 the building contained the only Catholic school of our suburb. So, St. Vincent's may justly be called the Cradle of Catholicity in Tacony.

THE FIRST PASTORS

Rev. John George Gmeiner, 1858 — 1859

The Rev. John George Gmeiner, has the distinction of being the first pastor of St. Vincent's. We find his name for the first time in the Baptismal Record of December 1858. This date must therefore be considered as the beginning of parish-life in St. Vincent's.

Father Gmeiner was born in Oberbildstein (near Brixen, Austria), on January 11, 1799. According to the notes in his diary, he must have been one of the best students of his class. Even when advanced in years he could still write and speak Latin fluently. He was ordained on August 1, 1830, by the famous Bishop Galura, of Brixen. In 1837 he was appointed pastor of the large parish of Silberthal, where he labored for thirteen years. In opposition to "Josephinism", Father Gmeiner made special efforts to revive Catholic Liturgy. He persuaded his flock to a regular attendance of Mass on Sundays and Holydays; he bought the most beautiful vestments, and gave each of his families "Goffine's Handpostille", a well known exposition of the Sunday Epistles and Gospels.

In his fiftieth year he came to America, and on June 21, 1853 was appointed resident pastor of St. Francis Church in Trenton, N. J., replacing the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Peter's, Philadelphia, who until then had cared for the spiritual needs of the German

Catholics*. There he built the parish school and employed the School Sisters of Notre Dame as teachers**. Worn out and sick, he went back to the old country only to return in a short time. His last signature at Tacony bears the date of April 1859. In the same year he was reappointed pastor of St. Francis in Trenton, N. J., where he remained until 1865. On December 28, 1876, he died in Glen Riddle as Chaplain of the Franciscan Sisters. During the last six years of his life he was able to say Mass only. The obituary in the "Nord-Amerika" (January 6, 1877) praises his goodness of heart, piety and zeal. While in Tacony he usually added to his signature the words "Missionarius Apostolicus", Apostolic Missionary. He therefore, did not regard himself so much a residing pastor than as a missionary who, wandering from place to place, attended the religious needs of German speaking Catholics in this section.

Rev. James McNaughton, 1859 — 1860

Like Father Gmeiner, the next two pastors also remained but a short time. His successor, James McNaughton, was appointed September 1, 1859 (according to Bishop Neumann's Notebook), and remained scarcely a year. Towards the end of August 1860 he was transferred.

Rev. James McNaughton seems to have been an Irish immigrant priest. The Catholic Directory of 1853 mentions him as assistant at SS. Peter and Paul's in Philadelphia. From 1854 to 1856, he was pastor of St. Basil's Church, Dushore, Pa., and at the same time also attended SS. Philip and James' in Sugar Ridge. The Directory of 1861 lists him as a member of St. Joseph's College, Philadelphia, while the House Chronicle of the same year mentions him as pastor of Old St. Mary's, Philadelphia. No further data can be found.

Rev. John Tanzer, 1860 — 1861

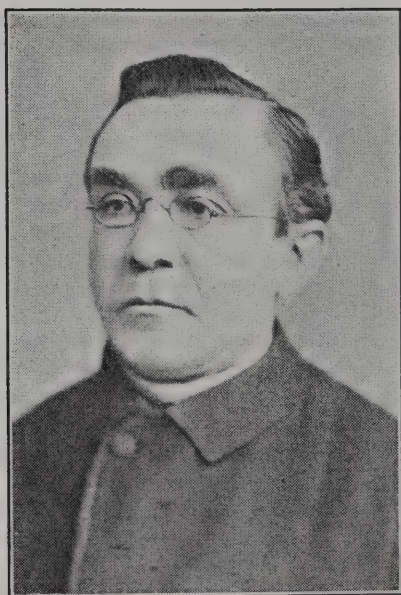
In October 1860, Father McNaughton was succeeded by the Rev. John Tanzer, who remained until July 1861.***

Father Tanzer was born December 20, 1820 in Studenitz, Austria, was ordained on August 1, 1845 and came to the United States October 15, 1853. The Catholic Directory lists him as pastor of St. Joseph's in Easton, Pa., from 1855 to 1860 and states in 1856 that he visited Stroudsburg four times a year. From 1861 until 1891 he was pastor of St. Patrick's, a small mixed congregation in Fort Hamilton, Kings Co., N. Y. In the history of this parish (Rev. Michael Hefferman, Sketch of St. Patrick's) we are told, that "Father Tanzer, or as he was affectionately called by the people, Father John, was a man full of zeal and anxious to do good for everybody . . . He found it hard to adapt himself to American ways and hated the word 'progress'. . . . He built a frame school house in 1863 — and about 1877 brought the Sisters of St. Dominic, to take charge of the school which was formerly conducted by lay teachers". He died in 1895.

*Father Linus Schwarze, present rector of St. Francis', kindly copied the passage from the parish history.

**The Schematismus of the School Sisters of Notre Dame for the year 1861, tells us that the aged Father Gmeiner wept for joy, when the two sisters arrived in September 1860 to take care of his very neglected children about 100 in number. The Sisters remained but six years due to quarrels within the parish. (Schematismus of 1867).

***Whenever a priest was needed in these months of vacancy, the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Peter's took over the parish work.



Rev. Matthias J. Meurer, 1861 — 1868

The first pastor destined to stay for a longer period was the Rev. Matthias Joseph Meurer. He had loved the Orphan Asylum from its beginning, having said his first Mass in the still unfinished building. Born October 25, 1825 in Montabaur (Nassau) as the son of a Hungarian nobleman and a well educated German mother, he arrived in America August 2, 1852, prepared for the holy priesthood in St. Charles Seminary, Philadelphia, and was ordained four years later by the Ven. Bishop Neumann. His first assignment was to Pottsville, Pa., where he converted to the Catholic Faith Mother Agnes, later the well known Superior General of the Franciscan Sisters of Glen Riddle. Appointments to Minersville and Little York followed in quick succession and in December 1861, he was made pastor of St. Vincent's, Tacony. In later years, he did missionary work in Wisconsin and Alabama, returned to Pennsylvania, and died as Chaplain in Glen Riddle on March 7, 1894.

Father Meurer was only 36 years old, when he was appointed pastor at Tacony. For seven years St. Vincent's enjoyed the influence of his priestly zeal. But the scarcity of priests, especially of German speaking priests, at that time was very great. For this reason, in 1863, Father Meurer had to transfer his residence to Bridesburg, where All Saints' Parish had been founded three years previous and to which over 300 German members belonged. Yet he was obliged to say Mass in St. Vincent's three times weekly and to give religious instruction to the children at least twice a week. By this

change of the Bishop St. Vincent's was no longer an independent parish, but only an annex, a mission to Bridesburg.

The First Parishioners

Previous to the introduction of industry, the development of Tacony progressed very slowly. Until 1870 only 50 family names of German origin appear in the parish registers. Anthony Dusch is mentioned with special honor as one of the pioneers of Tacony. But it seems to be probable that Anthony Bielefeld (now Bellfield), had arrived before him. He was the first supervisor of the Orphan Asylum, for which he did much carpenter work. The northern wing of the centre building was the product of his personal labors. Besides these two families, such names as Lepping, Criqui, Hermann, Miltenberger, Steinmetz and Ursprung are most frequently found in the first records*. These families are the basic stock on which St. Hubert's parish was built, and in their many branches may still be considered as such today. After 1870, the Muellers, Hepps, Ebbeckes and Hunds are mentioned. Most of these settlers were born in Germany, but only in a few instances are the names of their birthplaces given.**

The first baptism of a Taconian is recorded in 1859. On the 20th of February, Itta Theresia Funk was baptized. She was the daughter of Johannes Funk who worked the farms of the Orphan Asylum. The godfather was Anthony Bielefeld and godmother, Itta Hermann. The second baptism was that of Elizabeth Bielefeld, the third of Magdalen Lepping. Mr. Anthony Bielefeld, also, gave the first baptism in danger of death to Anthony Joseph Herrmann, who died shortly afterwards. Until 1868, there was an average of over ten baptisms every year. The great depression of 1873 decreased the number of settlers, and we find only five baptisms recorded for that year. In 1876 the record shows thirteen baptisms, since then the number gradually rose until it reached thirty in 1883. With the opening of St. Leo's in 1884, it dropped to the low level of nine in 1889. The advent of the Italians, beginning in 1903, increased the number to fifty in 1911, the greatest number ever baptized in a single year.

The first death of the parish was that of Michael Ursprung. He died June 18, 1861. He was a baby one year and eleven months old. The first eleven to die were children, many from the Home. As a rule, previous to 1870, we never find more than three deaths annually. The year 1863, with twelve entries, is an exception. The records give no indication regarding the cause.

*In 1859 we find in addition to the names of Funk, Bielefeld, Hermann and Lepping, the names Birkenmeier, Hartmann, Stengel, Haas, Zimmermann. In 1860 also Badum, Suen derhaft, Gensheimer, Nagel, Josberger, Eisinger. In 1861, Dumas, Heer, Hullen, Mustbach, Schmalzried (Protestant), Mietsch. 1863: Barthmaier, Weinmann. 1865: Matheis, Kaiser, Huelsemann, Bollinger, Dahmann. 1866: Miltenberger, Mayer. 1867: Ringler. 1868: Burg, Fleischhaut, Bausch. 1869: Ring. 1870: Dollmeier, Hund.

**Wm. Lepping and his wife came from Lippstadt (Westfalia), Anthony Hermann and Dumas were born in Rhenish Palatinate. Steinmetz was an Alsatian. So were the Criqui's and Reinholds. Bielefeld was born in Grafenstein (Prussia), Nagel and Gensheimer emigrated from Baden.

The first marriage entry was made in 1860. The record shows the difficult conditions under which the priests had to labor. Not a single date is known. The entry written in Latin is given in the following translation — —

"On February 12, 1860, I united in matrimony Gottlieb Betz, born in the year ? in ? living in ? with Ludovica Drexler, old ? years, born in ?. The witnesses were Carola Wittmann and Paulina Betz. Rev. James McNaughton".

In the same year we find five more marriages entered. But to the year 1871, there were only 12 marriages in all.

CIVIL WAR AND THE ORPHAN ASYLUM

Fully ten years elapsed before the main building of St. Vincent's saw its completion. The first buds of enthusiasm had been nipped by the frost of the financial depression in 1857. Recovery had scarcely set in and further plans been made, when the hard years of the Civil War (1860 — 1865) again retarded progress. When peace was restored, the first building had been completed. From now on, all plans of improvements or further expansion rested until the years of Reconstruction had restored normal conditions.

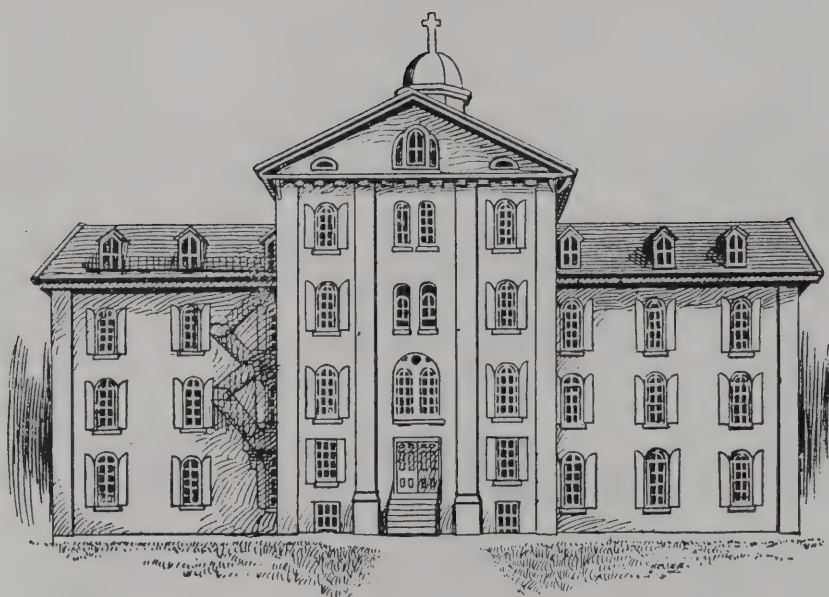
With the Civil War terminates in many respects a definite period of our Home. Whereas up to 1865, we could follow its history in detail, we have for the next 15 years only a few newspaper reports and the House Chronicle as sources of information. Most of the original sources, the ledgers, and the minute books for these years, cannot be found.

There is only one passage in the House Chronicle, mentioning the Civil War. "The material was so expensive this year (1865) on account of the war, that calico, bought for the girls, cost 75 cents per yard". Owing to the scarcity and high prices of provisions, the Asylum incurred a large debt, which was felt the more as the Home depended entirely upon charity. The need of these years is illuminated by a report of 1869.

"On May 7, twenty-eight children received their First Holy Communion. We had to borrow shirts from the boarders since there were no others available for the orphans. For several months we asked for the necessary material. On First Holy Communion Day we received money for the orphans, which we used for shirt material. After that, the Board supplied the rest of the necessary material" (H.C.)

The Civil War also proved the necessity and importance of the Orphan Homes. It would have been impossible to place the many War Orphans in private homes. Now the State of Pennsylvania for the first time undertook to care for its orphans on a larger scale. The State placed most of her War Orphans in the already existing institutions. In this manner, sixteen orphans also found their way into our Home, two were from Chester, Pa., the rest from Philadelphia, Pa. The State paid \$100 annually per child. These orphans were placed under the supervision of the Director of the Orphans' Schools of Pennsylvania who had to visit the various in-

stitutions regularly. This lasted until 1875 when the last child was dismissed. Through its acceptance of War Orphans, St. Vincent's lost some of its purely parochial character. The State, on the other hand, had become more conscious of its duty towards the orphan.



OLD SKETCH OF THE MAIN BUILDING

PART II.

ST. VINCENT'S THE CENTRE OF GERMAN CATHOLIC ACTIVITY IN PHILADELPHIA

1865 — 1907

ANOTHER high mark in German immigration was reached after the Civil War between the years 1866 and 1873, with a yearly influx of 130,000 immigrants. Military duty and hard circumstances at home compared with the possibility of securing free land in America were largely responsible for this increase. Two parishes for German speaking Catholics were established in Philadelphia during this time: St. Boniface in 1866 and St. Elizabeth in 1872. Both were destined to rank among the largest congregations of the city. After St. Boniface had been given to the Redemptorist Fathers in 1876 and the great financial troubles had been overcome through the zeal of Father Schnuettgen, C. SS. R., this parish became one of the mainstays in the support of St. Vincent's Orphanage. Father Dornhege, the founder of St. Elizabeth's, showed a great personal interest in the Home, but the families of Irish birth soon surpassed the original German stock destroying its character as a German parish. Thus, it was never of any importance to the Home after the eighties.

The years 1880 to 1890 showed the largest German immigration in the history of the United States. More than a million and a half left the fatherland. In 1882, 250,630 immigrants arrived, the greatest number that ever applied for admission in any year. For the years 1891 and 1892, 244,000 Germans were registered. Now new parishes sprang up in quick order, the first one, Our Lady Help of Christians being founded in 1885. It is the work of Father George Wolf who died in 1927, and is located opposite Nativity Church, the latter founded by the Fathers of St. Boniface in 1881, but like St. Elizabeth's had been changed into an English speaking congregation. In 1889, Father H. Stommel, "the church builder", and Father Hubert Hammeke, its present pastor, founded St. Bonaventura's. Both Our Lady Help of Christians and St. Bonaventura's served the needs of the German Catholics in the greater Northeast. The German Catholics of Northwestern Philadelphia set out to build another Church of their own after losing St. Elizabeth's. In 1891 St. Ludwig's was begun in Brewerytown under the direction of Father Bernard Korves. St. Ignatius, erected in 1893 by Monsignor Heinen, was to care for the Germans of West Philadelphia. He, like Father Stommel, was one of the outstanding priests in the Diocese of Philadelphia. This period of rapid building came to a close with the erection of St. Aloysius by Father Wachter in 1894. It was the last German Church to be built before the World War.

St. Vincent's Orphanage was profoundly influenced by this increase of German speaking Catholics in Philadelphia. The number of its orphans grew quickly, which in turn called for new buildings. The Home depended on the assistance of these immigrants and consequently, looked for new means to arouse their interest and gain their cooperation. The two chief means selected were the foundation of two newspapers and the Orphan Festivals. By these, St. Vincent's became the center of German Catholic activity. Since its foundation, it had enjoyed the cooperation of all German Catholics of the city and had been united with them by its organization, but now it became their leader.



SEWINGROOM AT ST. VINCENT'S

CHAPTER I

THE "PHILADELPHIA VOLKSBLATT" AND THE "NORD-AMERIKA"

IN 1836 Father Henni of Cincinnati, later Archbishop of Milwaukee, had published the "Wahrheitsfreund" (Friend of Truth) in behalf of the first German Catholic Orphanage in the United States. It was a huge success, having a circulation of 14,120 copies in 1876. Many similar publications followed in other German Catholic centres. The "Katholische Volkszeitung" of Baltimore had the largest circulation with 22,000 subscribers, which made it the predominant German newspaper of that city. Only a few of the secular German newspapers in other cities could boast of a larger circulation. The average German publication of the period had a circulation varying between four and nine thousand copies.

These papers were a necessity to the new German Catholic immigrants, as a means of preserving their faith, and also of acquainting them with Catholic undertakings in the new country. They had an important mission to fulfill when "Liberalism" had reached the zenith in its attack upon everything Catholic. The German secular press of America was just as bitter as that of the old country. In Germany this hatred of the Catholic Church led to the "Kulturkampf", and the subsequent expulsion of religious orders from the Fatherland. Many priests and educated Catholic lay persons came to the United States and here also took up the fight against the enemies of their religion through the Catholic press. More than 25 new publications were founded between 1870 and 1875.

This general trend of the time to establish German Catholic papers in the larger centres of population and the great success of the "Katholische Volkszeitung" of Baltimore which had many subscribers in Philadelphia, no doubt, led the managers of St. Vincent's to vision: a daily newspaper published by the Home for the German Catholics of Philadelphia and its vicinity. It is a pity that all records of the Board meetings of this period have been lost, leaving us in ignorance of the reasons and discussions that brought about the beginning of the first German Catholic Daily in Philadelphia. We only know, that Rev. William Loewekamp, C.S.S.R., then Rector of St. Peter's and President of St. Vincent's, was most active in its establishment.

The title of the new Daily was "Philadelphia Volksblatt." Its first number appeared on January 8, 1872, and its first Sunday edition the "Nord-Amerika" was published on September 13, 1873. A prospectus of the Volksblatt, which seems to have been distributed amongst the Church-goers, gives us insight into the plans and aims of this publication. According to this prospectus, the Volksblatt is the

property of St. Vincent's Orphanage, Tacony, and is published for its benefit. The monetary gain derived from its publication shall serve a twofold purpose, the further development of the paper into one of the finest in the city and the upkeep of the Home.

Politically the Volksblatt shall be independent. Its motto is "Truth without fear" to indicate that it shall speak freely regarding all questions concerning the public well being. The new paper, although not intending to be a religious publication, will, nevertheless, adhere strictly to the principles of Catholic truth and morals and will fight against calumniations and wrong principles that enter public life. It will endeavor to secure all important news as quickly as possible. A special column will be reserved for questions and answers on American conditions and other points of general interest. The prospectus finally claims that the success of the paper cannot be doubted since already 4,000 subscribers have been secured.

The size of the first numbers was 16 by 22 inches. In April, 1872, it adopted the standard size of the newspapers, 20" by 24". Each number, like all newspapers of the period, consisted of four pages of seven columns each. The first page gave the general news, the second the editorials, the third a story, the fourth the local news, especially proceedings of the courts. Each page was interspersed with many advertisements. The weekly subscription was 12c or \$6.00 per year.

The paper was printed at 122½ N. 4th Street, under the guidance of the first editor, Charles Even.

Joseph Bernt

He was joined, in April, 1872, by the young Joseph Bernt, who was for many years to direct the destiny of the two papers. Born in 1839 in Feldberg, Austria, son of a respected physician, he studied law at the University of Vienna, where he acquired the title of Doctor in that profession. In 1870, he came to Philadelphia. He had just completed his thirty-first year when he was made editor of the Volksblatt and remained in that position until 1896. On leaving, he became agent for the German Society of Pennsylvania. He was one of the founders of the "Society of German Journalists" and occupied the office of president at the time of his death, which occurred on August 29, 1916.

During its first years the "Volksblatt" was democratic with a strong inclination towards the "Reform-Party" favored by Charles Schurz, the greatest political leader Germany sent to America. The attacks upon Grant's poor government were very bitter. In the editorials, the question of capitalism and labor is treated excellently. Many of them were written by the Fathers of St. Peter's Church. The fight against "fanaticism" in American life was also carried on energetically. The editors fought for Temperance against Prohibition, which they prophesied fifty years in advance. "Nativism" and the "Blue Sunday Laws" were also sharply criticized.

The "Volksblatt" has faithfully adhered to its principles. It is one of the few German Catholic dailies that did not become secularized. This defense of Catholic standards was "its mark of recognition," as the contemporary "Stimme der Wahrheit" of Detroit wrote in Janu-

ary, 1876. In June of the same year, the "Volksblatt" and the "Nord-Amerika" were for a period of two years prohibited from entering Germany by order of Bismarck, the German Chancellor, because of their vigorous attack on his anti-church policy. This prohibition is the highest praise ever given to both papers in their entire history.

PART OF THE ORPHAN ASYLUM

Financially, these two papers were not as successful as some of the contemporaries believed. Their circulation is given in 1876 as 4500 for the "Volksblatt" and 3367 for the "Nord-Amerika." To make the publication possible at all, a "German Volksblatt Society" had been founded. Shares were sold at \$5.00, the Board of Managers of St. Vincent's guaranteeing for these shares. Only 1099 shares, however, were sold. Since the \$5,495.00 realized from this sale was used entirely for buying the necessary outfit like types, desks, etc., the printers were not in an enviable position. Having spent every penny, they obtained another loan from the Orphans Board. Until 1878, the money advanced by the latter amounted to \$7,557.57. The Board also bought a Printing Press for \$5,000. It is, therefore, due entirely to their assistance that both papers could start their mission.

But in spite of these sacrifices of the Board, its hopes of financial returns did not materialize as quickly as was anticipated. After the first year, a great financial crisis, equaled only by the depression of 1930, hampered the progress of the two papers. Hundreds of banks failed. Five millions of people were unemployed. Newspapers, especially those of recent foundation, suffered with other branches of business. Besides these exterior detrimental influences, there was also, neglect and carelessness on the part of the managers. Carriers and agents kept money which they had collected for subscriptions and advertisements. Other advertisements were never paid. Thus, looking at an edition of the "Volksblatt" with its many advertisements, one was convinced the paper was in a flourishing condition, but its receipts were not what might have been expected. Another reason was the lack of harmony between the different boards of directors. The managers of St. Vincent's had appointed a "newspaper committee," from which the editor of the Volksblatt took his orders. Among these three groups there was not sufficient harmony and the lack of experience on all sides made the situation very difficult. The diversity of interests would have put cooperation to hard tests under normal conditions. The losses incurred as a result of poor business conditions, amounted to about \$7,000 in 1877, though the very favorable report of the "newspaper-committee" of this same year estimated it only at \$3,163.00.

Jacob Kirchem

In 1877, Mr. Joseph Bernt was appointed sole manager. Under his management a small profit was realized, but in 1880, the Board of Managers had to advance another \$2,800, whereupon they decided to sell the papers. Not finding a buyer, they leased them to Mr. Jacob Kirchem for the next five years. The contract called for a payment of

\$250 for the first year, \$300 for the second and \$400 for the next three years in "merchandise." For the "Nord-Amerika" he was to pay in the same order, 5, 7½ and 10 cents.*

For a number of years, this arrangement proved satisfactory. The Orphanage received a return of more than \$1,000 yearly for the two newspapers. This was due partly to an improvement in economic conditions as well as to an increase in immigration.

The best helper of Mr. Kirchem was his only son, whose interesting articles on German Catholic action in the different parts of the East, were a feature of both papers. His untimely death in 1886, broke the heart of Mr. Kirchem. He lost interest in his work and his fortune slowly decreased. When he died in 1900, there were scarcely twenty mourners in Holy Trinity Church at the coffin of this once highly honored man.

Charles J. Young

After the lease for the first five years had expired, Mr. Kirchem renewed it on somewhat different terms. He was to pay \$100 monthly, two-thirds of which was to be cash, and the remainder in merchandise. In 1888 Mr. Charles Young undertook their publication under the same arrangements. The depression of the nineties made it impossible for Mr. Young to fulfill his obligations, though the Board of Managers showed the greatest consideration. It reduced the lease to \$50.00 a month, besides making other allowances; but when even these obligations became too heavy, and the Board had to meet many running expenses for type, etc., it decided on May 2, 1898 to discontinue the "Volksblatt" and to lease the "Nord-Amerika" to Mr. John Wiesler, Jr., in return for a monthly payment to the orphanage.

This was the end of an undertaking begun with great hopes. Sooner or later, the same fate would have befallen the Volksblatt. If no Catholic Daily in English could exist permanently, how much less a daily newspaper edited in a language that was condemned to die out with the cessation of immigration? At one time Philadelphia boasted of eight German newspapers, today there are but two.

THE "NORD-AMERIKA"

The "Nord-Amerika" was the Sunday-edition of the Volksblatt. It served mainly as a religious paper. It appeared every Saturday. Its first editions could compete with the best published in the States, a fact that was recognized by the contemporary press. In its program of April 18th, 1874, the "Nord-Amerika" promises the following items for each number:

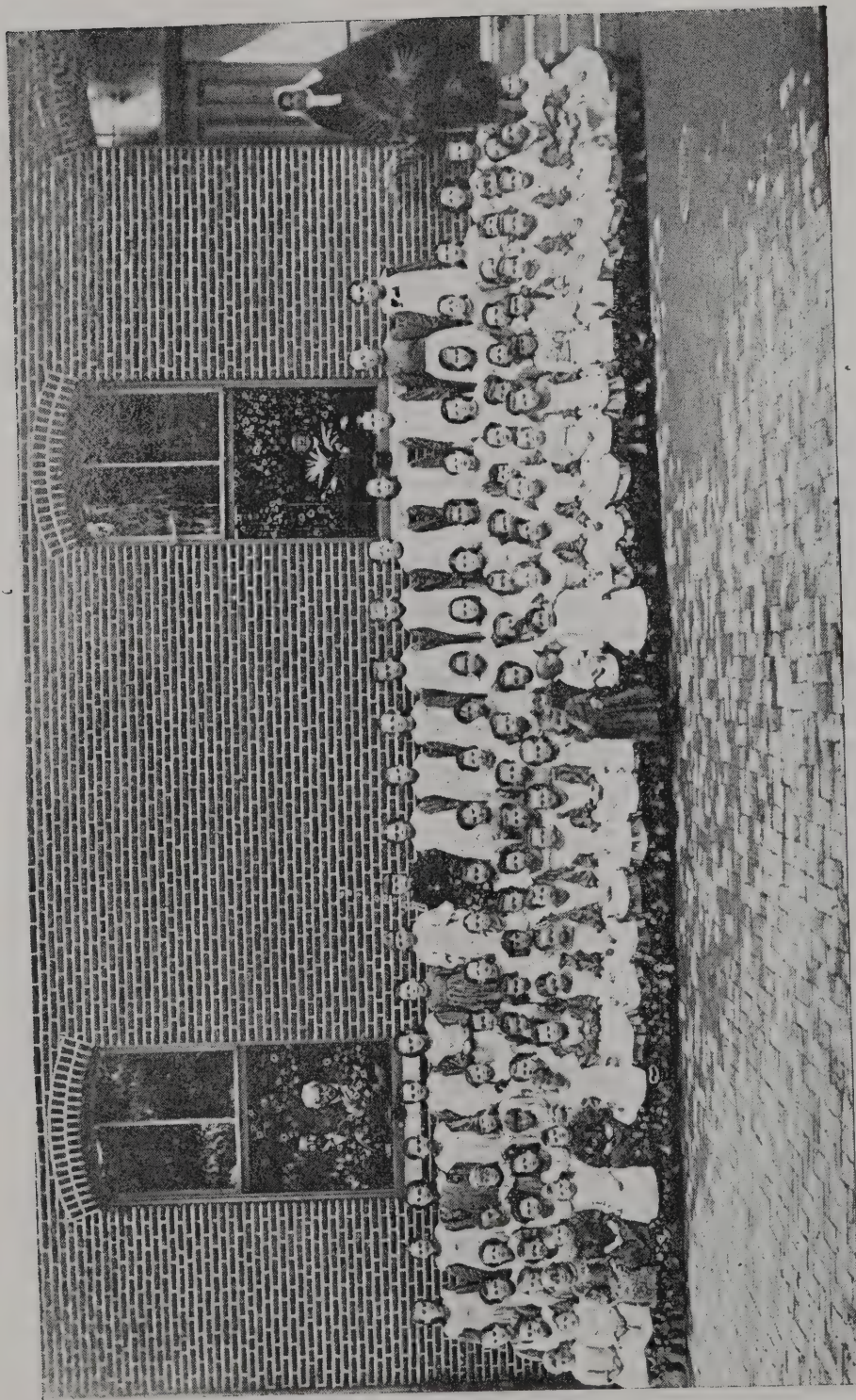
*This arrangement enables us to obtain the number of subscribers to the paper since the Orphan's Board always asked for a detailed account. In 1884, Mr. Kirchem printed 8345 copies of the "Nord-Amerika": 4320 were paid for, 3595 were not, and 430 were given away. In 1885, he printed 8565 copies: 2032 readers owed payment for more than a year, 2158 for less than a year. 510 copies were given away. For the remaining 3865 copies the Board received \$386.00. The payment in "merchandise" for the "Volksblatt" was made in the following manner. The merchants sent their advertisements, but instead of paying for them in cash, they sent a certain amount of dry goods or groceries to the Orphanage. The value of the latter was then credited to Mr. Kirchem. This was a very popular method in those days. It was advantageous to Mr. Kirchem, because he could procure advertisements which he would otherwise have never received and at the same time make payment on his lease. It was likewise advantageous for the smaller merchants because no cash was involved and they advertised at reasonable prices.

1. An exact and complete review of all news in political and ecclesiastical life, both foreign and domestic.
2. All official decrees of the Holy See and of the American and German Episcopate as far as they are of general interest.
3. One long and two short stories of the newest Catholic literature.
4. Biographies. 5. Travelogues. 6. Articles on science and natural history, etc. 7. Poems, Miscellanea, Humor, etc. It has followed this program to the present day.

The main importance of the "Nord-Amerika" lies in the abundant material it offers regarding the history of German Catholicism in Pennsylvania. For this reason alone its loss would be irreparable.

Of special interest are the editions of the "Nord-Amerika" of the nineties when it, in union with the entire German Catholic Press, fought the great battles against "Americanism" and in favor of the Catholic School system. Due to its well written articles and editorials, the "Nord-Amerika" was one of the leading papers. It vigorously opposed "Americanism" in which some only saw a phantom of the German professors. It waged a successful war in defense of the Catholic School. And when in retaliation the battle diverted against German Catholicism, then Peter Paul Cahensly and Msgr. Dr. Schroeder found in her an able and determined advocate.

Regarding the further history of the "Nord-Amerika" it may be remarked that the paper made good progress after 1900 as a result of the efforts of Rev. Theodore Hammeke, the "Zeitungsvater." In 1910, its size was increased to seven columns. In 1914 it acquired the subscribers of the Baltimore "Katholische Volkszeitung" which had ceased publication. This explains the origin of the news sections regarding "Baltimore and Vicinity."



A GROUP OF CHILDREN (1890 — 1895)

CHAPTER II.

THE ORPHAN FESTIVALS

THROUGH the publication of the two newspapers, St. Vincent's gained lasting merit, helping to preserve the faith of the German Catholics of Pennsylvania. The second aim of this undertaking to acquire a regularly flowing source of income was not realized. On the contrary, it was a steady drain on the resources of the Home in the first years. Therefore, the Board had to seek other sources of revenue.

From the beginning, the German parishes of the City had sponsored picnics in favor of the Home. At first, these were given by the individual parishes. Later on, the "uptown parishes," St. Peter's and St. Boniface's combined, as did also the "downtown parishes," St. Alphonsus' and Holy Trinity. However, there never was an assemblage of all the parishes on any one occasion. With the opening of the Home, these picnics were held mostly in Tacony. On these days the grounds of the Orphan Asylum reminded one of a carnival day in the Fatherland. All the attractions to which these old Germans were accustomed at home were provided, so that one could see fortune-wheels, cake stands, tables with toys, and booths with merchandise. Prize drawings were not forgotten, neither were refreshments.

When the depression of 1873 had somewhat abated and the idea of German Unity filled the minds of Germans all over the world, especially after the war with France in 1870-71, popular festivals were celebrated by various civil and religious bodies. Soon there was a desire to have a yearly festival for the German speaking Catholics of the city. As in establishing the newspapers, the managers of St. Vincent's again took the leadership and gave their fellowmen a yearly union in the Orphan Festivals. The first attempt, in 1879, was a great success. The "Nord-Amerika" gives us a detailed description July 26, 1879.

A parade opened the festival. About 100 orphans participated in it. The girls were dressed in white with pink sashes. The boys wore linen trousers, white shirts, blue sashes, blue ties and dark straw hats. Each child carried an American flag. The children and several sisters left Tacony in the morning at half-past six going by boat to St. Peter's where they breakfasted and awaited the commencement of the parade.

The children were seated in omnibuses drawn by elaborately decorated horses. A guard of honor of St. Peter's Pioneer Corps accompanied them on horseback. Other carriages followed, several filled with the Catholic clergymen of the German Parishes in the city. Many houses were decorated and the orphans were loudly cheered by the vast crowd of spectators. The route led up Fifth Street to Diamond Street, Germantown Ave., Lehigh Ave., and Broad Street towards Rising Sun Park.

Until evening, trains and horsecars had brought from eight to

ten thousand visitors to the park. The various German Societies, with banners unfurled, were greeted with music and a speech by the committee in charge. Among the many societies that participated may be mentioned the "Schweizer National Festverein," the "Bayrische Volksfest Verein," the singing societies of the "Concordia" and the "Centennial Society" who arrived in a body.

At 3 o'clock, a splendid concert was given in the large park hall. "Ich bitt euch, liebe Vögelein"; "The Heavens are telling"; "Der deutsche Männergesang"; "Leb' wohl, mein Vaterland" were some of the numbers sung by the six different male choirs.

All amusements such as the wheels, swings, carousels, etc., were well patronized. All the German papers in the city had advertised the Orphan Festival free of charge. The tickets had been sold for 25c, but the amusement park took almost half of the receipts. Therefore, the net results amounted to only \$4,000.

For the future this festival became an annual event, retaining all attractions with the exception of the parades, which were discontinued after 1880. The German priests of Philadelphia never failed to attend in large numbers. Almost always the reporter of the "Nord-Amerika" notes how modestly and decently these festivals were celebrated in strong contrast to other celebrations of a similar kind.

The parks chosen for these activities were "Jahn's Rising Sun Park" on Germantown Ave., near the intersection with Old York Road, "Central Park" (4400 N. 5th St., now St. Henry's Parish) or "Washington Park" (26th and Allegheny Ave.) They are no longer in existence.

The first interruption was caused through the "High License Law" of Pennsylvania in 1887, which made this kind of celebration almost impossible in Pennsylvania. Therefore the festivals were held in Camden "Schuetzenpark." With the growing propaganda for total abstinence the sentiment turned against these affairs. The voting for and against was often very close in the Board meetings. The work of preparing the festivals was very laborious and dependence upon the weather too great. The economic distress of the early nineties did not render the festivals very successful. Therefore, the Board looked for a new source of income, and found it in the "Donation-day" 1892; and when in 1909 State-support was granted to the Home besides a special collection throughout the Diocese, the city-wide orphan festivals were discontinued. The Volksverein of Philadelphia took them over for its own aims, but the war interrupted them and they have never since been reestablished.

The importance of these festivals is manifold. For years they were the only outside revenue of the Home. They also gave to German Catholics a greater unity. It was the only celebration of the year, at which all parishes met. The Catholic Central Verein secured unity among the men, but the orphan-festivals were family feasts, feasts for everyone.

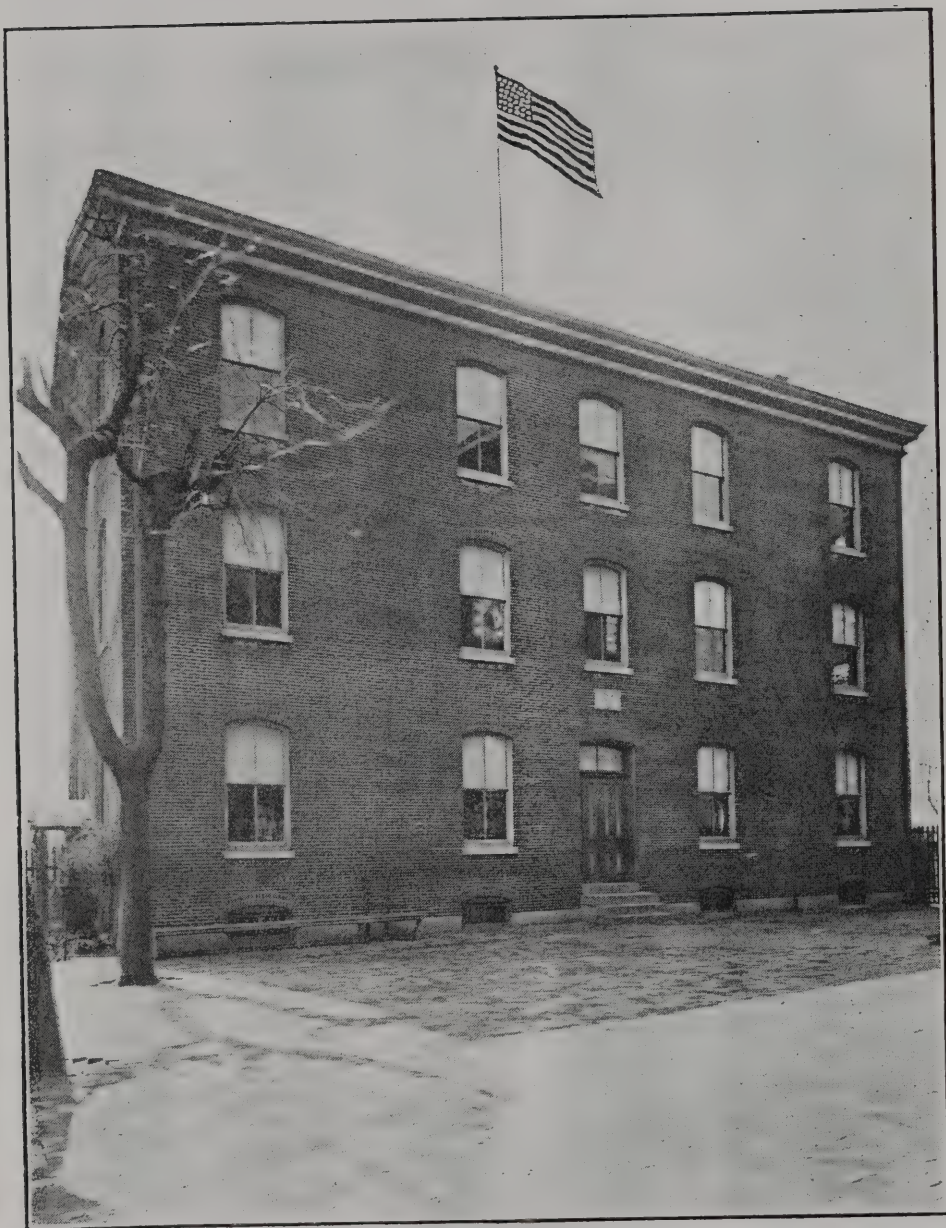
Two extraordinary ways were undertaken by the Board of Managers to provide sufficient means for St. Vincent's. Both were of greatest value to the German Catholics of the City and of the State.

The newspapers were fountains for preserving their faith. The orphan festivals contributed a great deal to strengthening the German national spirit. In return the German Catholics took a lively interest in all that concerned the Orphan Asylum.

THE SILVER JUBILEE

The high esteem and the great love in which St. Vincent's was held, found vivid expression in the inspiring celebration of its Silver Jubilee on October 2, 1883. A special train arrived at 9 o'clock in the morning with approximately 400 visitors. The gaily decorated town greeted them with lively strains from the music corps and the roaring salutes of mortars. At ten o'clock, the children of the Orphanage and the many clergymen present entered the chapel in solemn procession where Father Wirth sang a Solemn High Mass, assisted by Rev. B. Dornhege, pastor St. Elizabeth's and Rev. J. Regnery of Newtown. The choir of St. Peter's rendered the sacred music. Father Hiltermann, an eloquent speaker, preached the sermon. He began—"There is something beautiful about a child." It aimed to create a love for the orphan in the hearts of those present. A great banquet followed the religious services. It was served by ladies of the different parishes under the supervision of Mrs. Dorothy Wagner.

The reception of the various German Societies, had been scheduled for the afternoon. These arrived by train and were led to the Home accompanied by a band of music. At the entrance Mr. Franz Heidel, the speaker for the Board during this whole period, greeted each society. The first to arrive was the "Cannstatter Volksfest Verein," followed by the "Schweizer Nationalfest Verein." Visitors arrived in great numbers. There were about 4,000 who crowded every corner of St. Vincent's. In the afternoon a parade composed of the orphans and the Board and led by Father Hiltermann and Father Wirth greeted the different societies, each of whom had its specially reserved section. After singing several songs, the orphans joined in the general activities of the people's feast. The many stands, (wheel, cake, ice cream, bars, etc.) had a very active day. Towards six o'clock the festivities came to an end as the two special trains of the Pennsylvania R. R. were scheduled for this time.



THE SCHOOL BUILDING (Erected in 1893)

CHAPTER III.
YEARS OF PROGRESS
DELIVERANCE FROM FINANCIAL TROUBLES



THE years following the Civil War were full of poverty and of difficulties. Many improvements had become necessary in St. Vincent's but the lack of funds and the already existing debts made them impossible.

The splendid spirit shown by the celebration of the Silver Jubilee proved a turn towards better conditions. The many visitors on this day had taken home with them a greater love for the Orphanage. At this period business began to improve; hence the friends of the Home soon were able to assist it more substantially. The Board had also been rejuvenated by a number of willing young workers like Francis Heidel, Herman Weweler, and Henry Brockhoff. Together, with the older members, e. g. John Kieffer, Christian Krimm, Peter Kitt, Francis Bellwoar, J. Kirchem, Christopher Fluehr, they formed a splendid group of Managers, working in perfect harmony. The leadership of the gifted Father Wirth, C. SS. R., rector of St. Peter's, of the prudent Father Schick of St. Alphonsus' and of the energetic Father Hiltermann of Holy Trinity, was also instrumental in bringing about better financial conditions.

The Great Fair

The combination of all these factors led to the greatest financial success of any undertaking in the history of St. Vincent's up to this period. It was the Great Fair held in the Red Men's Hall during November, 1884.

This event was proposed to the Board by Father Hiltermann, who had just been elected pastor of Holy Trinity, and by Mr. Brueckner, Board member of the same parish. Father Schick was elected president over a large Committee, consisting of 42 men and 110 ladies selected from the four parishes of the Corporation: Holy Trinity, St. Peter's, St. Alphonsus' and St. Boniface's. It took many weeks of detailed preparation to insure the success of the Fair. Every week the committees met in a different parish hall to discuss plans, to report progress and arouse enthusiasm.

The Fair was opened on November 3, 1884 with a Grand March of all the Committee members while Hart's Orchestra played. The spacious circular-shaped hall proved ideal for the occasion, its beauty being heightened by the many festoons and flags with which it was decorated.

The various stands were in charge of the four German parishes and the orphanage. On entering the Hall, the first stand to the left was that of Holy Trinity Church. It fairly groaned under its burden

of porcelain, handiwork, glassware. To the left of this booth a post-office had been erected for the special accommodation of visitors. Ice cream and cake were dispensed in an adjoining room. The next stand was that of St. Alphonsus', which also afforded a large and attractive display of household articles, especially a beautiful bedroom suite. Next came a fishpond that contributed much to the amusement of the crowds. St. Peter's parish took charge of the next two stands which were fairly laden with ornamental and useful articles. As a novel feature, a skillfully executed portrait of Father Joseph Wirth done in crayon was displayed. Adjoining this table, the wheel of fortune was kept busy by the Young Men's Society of St. Peter's. The fourth stand was allotted to the care of St. Boniface's parish. Aside from the usual articles on display, it also attracted a lively interest because a doll, three feet high, dressed as a bride presided over the table. Last but not least, the visitor arrived at the two orphanage tables. One of the tables contained articles made by the sisters of the Home; the other displayed articles made by the children. A miniature representation of the orphans during recreation elicited general admiration.

In many ways this description of the fair reminds us of a modern parish bazaar; yet there were some novel features. A "Fair Reporter" advertising new attractions and giving accounts of the progress of the fair was published daily. Another feature was the popularity contest held by three parishes in favor of their pastors, Joseph Wirth, H. Schick, and F. A. Litz, rector of St. Boniface's. The prize was a golden chalice. This contest alone netted \$4,040.31. However, the records do not mention the winner. Chances on two gold watches, a silver snuff box, a bicycle, and a harness amounted to \$1,832.66. These gratifying results were due entirely to the combined and untiring efforts of all the German parishes. In his address, Father Schick touched especially on this spirit of unity, saying, it had never before been manifested to such a degree. The various societies of the parishes came in groups on different evenings, as did also the German secular societies of the city. Several of them were accompanied by their own bands. Each society was welcomed in a short address, either by Mr. Heidel or Mr. Chas. Schmitt. Not less than twenty societies are mentioned by name. The old friends of the Home: the three great Volksfestvereine of the Cannstatter, the Bavarians and Swiss were outstanding due to their large representation and generosity. The social programs of the evenings were enriched by recitations given by ten singing societies who had voluntarily offered their services.

The net results of the Fair, after three weeks of activity, amounted to \$11,700.82. The expenses were approximately \$3,000. The Fair had been a grand success; and as an act of gratitude the President, Rev. Joseph Wirth, C. SS. R., celebrated the Holy Sacrifice in the chapel of the orphanage on December 30. The Board of Managers and 150 members of the Committee were present. In a touching sermon, Father Wirth spoke of the purpose of the orphanage, closing with words of thanks for the cooperation of the Committees.

The successful Fair induced other German pastors to make similar affairs a source of revenue for their respective parishes. The results

were most gratifying. Father Wolf, pastor of Our Lady Help of Christians, made \$8,000 in 1885. Father Dornhege, a year later, obtained \$18,000. To the Home, the unexpected receipts of the Fair meant the beginning of long needed improvements. On a smaller scale, a Fair is still held in the Home every year at Christmas time.

Benefactors

The success of the great Fair was increased and even overshadowed by the generosity of several German Catholic benefactors. Among the best known are the Drexel and Horstmann families. The name of Francis M. Drexel of Bavarian birth is written indelibly in the Annals of Charity in America, especially in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The latter was the recipient of his large fortune to be distributed among charitable institutions. In 1885 St. Vincent's received the sum of \$21,090.00.

Of equal renown for its charitable propensities as well as other accomplishments is the Horstmann family. We need only to be reminded of the Rt. Rev. Ignatius Horstmann, who was for many years the chancellor of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and later Bishop of Cleveland. The family was enrolled in St. Alphonsus' parish and at one time helped to save that church in a time of great financial distress. Almost every member of this exemplary family remembered St. Vincent's in his last testament. In legacies alone, they bequeathed over \$15,000 to the Home. These included twelve building lots at 22nd and Cambria Streets, given by Bishop Horstmann, which were sold in 1907 for \$8,700. Besides these legacies, there are many records of donations made during their lives.

It seems to have become almost customary, towards the end of the last century for friends of the Home to leave Real Estate to the same. Though not always very large pieces of property, nevertheless, the combined sum realized from the sale of these properties was a very important factor in the maintenance and further development of St. Vincent's.

Donation Day

The many difficulties connected with the celebration of the Orphan Festivals gave rise to new means of gathering the necessary funds. Chas. Young, publisher of the Philadelphia Volksblatt, and John W. Speckman proposed to the Board of Managers, that an annual drive be held for the benefit of the Orphanage. The Board accepted the suggestion. The records go back to the year 1892. The annual drive, known as Donation Day, closes on Thanksgiving Day and since its inception has always been conducted under the guidance of Mr. John W. Speckman, who has served as legal Counsellor for the orphanage during the past forty years. Donation Day has been a success from its beginning. The year 1894 shows a contribution of \$494.20. In 1903 the four parishes of the corporation held a special envelope collection which netted \$805.00. Since 1915, all the German parishes of the city have participated in the "Thanksgiving Day Collection." The largest amount ever realized was that of 1928, when the contributions totaled \$12,404.01. The yearly reports give a detailed list of all the donors.

Diocesan Support

About the time of the introduction of Donation Day, unexpected help came from another source. For many years the orphan asylums were left to themselves. The Diocesan authorities privately helped a great deal, but not on a large organized scale. This was the case throughout the United States. Towards the end of the XIX Century matters changed. In 1891 the first Diocesan collection for orphans was taken up in Philadelphia. The sum of money collected in the German speaking parishes was allotted to St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum. Its first share amounted to \$660.52. This policy continued until 1910 when Diocesan support ceased. In order to replace this loss which had amounted to about \$1,000.00 in later years, the German parishes took up a special envelope collection as stated on page 59.

NEW BUILDINGS

Improvements of 1884—1885. The New Laundry.

The happy results of the great Fair in 1884 and the large gift of Mr. Drexel enabled the Board to pay off the debts and start a great number of improvements. The whole building was repaired and painted; an iron fence around the church was erected for the protection of the children. The dining room in the basement was made higher and brighter through new excavations and a new kitchen was installed. The whole house was provided with its first steam heating plant. To make the latter possible a big water tank of 5,000 gallons was placed on the roof of the building. This reservoir, also, gave the first water supply to the whole house. New bath and toilet rooms were installed. One of the most important improvements, however, was the lighting of the house with gas. For a while the Board had even considered the erection of its own gas plant. Then the oil lamps of past years were abolished. Equally welcome was the improved drainage system. The Board of Health had insisted for quite a while on fire escapes. These were erected on the front and rear of both wings. Built of iron and closed in by wire, they offered great security against accidents and could readily be reached from every room of each floor. In old pictures they may still be seen. They were removed, when the fire towers on the rear of the building were erected in 1915 and 1919 respectively. These offer far greater security and more convenience.

At the time when these improvements were in the course of completion, the second building of St. Vincent's was erected, the Laundry. It is 60 by 30 feet and built of brick, two stories high with a large attic. Mr. McCarty was the contractor. Mr. Belwoar had drafted the plans. For the boiler room and the bakery special additions had to be made. The first floor containing the laundry was provided with three iron and twenty wooden washtubs, ironing boards, etc. The second floor was supposed to serve as an infirmary but was used as a bedroom for boys, "since the health of the children" we read "is so excellent, fortunately this room is not needed at once for its original purpose." The price of the building was \$6,300. The total expenses for this entire program of improvements surpassed \$25,000.

THE NEW SCHOOL—1893

With these improvements and the new building, all requirements seemed to have been satisfied for a long time to come, but immigration continued. The applicants from the German parishes increased the number of Orphans to more than 300.

The population of Tacony also grew with the great industrial plants built along the Delaware. St. Vincent's was the only Catholic School in Tacony until 1908. Therefore, the requests from Catholic parents in Tacony to educate their children in the school of the orphanage became more frequent. These petitions of outsiders could not easily be refused, because the Catholic Germans were the most ardent sponsors of the Catholic school system in the great battle against it during this period. The Board, therefore, decided to erect a new school building in 1893.

To Mr. McCarty, who had built the laundry, was also assigned this project. Frank L. Wentz was the architect. The building committee of the Board "looked more for the practical usefulness and sanitary accommodations than for architectural beauty."

The new building 64 by 30 feet stands south of the main building. It is three stories high, has a large basement, but no attic. The stairway is in the middle of the building, thus dividing each floor into two classrooms. Each of them is 28 by 28 feet wide and 12 feet high. Few schools, even today, have more cheerful or brighter class rooms. Six large windows 8 ft. high and 4½ ft. wide permit streams of light into each room from three sides. Gas was installed throughout the whole building and a special heating plant was erected in the large basement. The latter was connected by a tunnel with the other buildings. A ventilation system consisting of an airshaft, that could be opened or closed by a shutter was hailed as one of the most progressive features. The same had been put into use in the centre building when the improvements were made in 1885. The classrooms were furnished with every accommodation required by school hygiene of those days. New school desks were ordered. The expenses amounted to about \$12,000.

On Monday, September 15, 1893 the "Richtfest" was celebrated, a substitute for the cornerstone laying. Many friends were present. A special festivity had been abandoned, "since times were bad" as Father August Pingel, rector of St. Boniface's explained in his address. The panic of 1893 had affected the whole country:

Only four classrooms were used. They were sufficient, though somewhat crowded. The two upper rooms were joined into one and served as living room for the girls, until a new building could be erected.



A GROUP OF CHILDREN (1895 — 1900)

GRACE - HARRIS - PHILA.

CHAPTER IV.

CHILD WELFARE

THE principles and regulations which governed the admission and dismissal of a child in St. Vincent's were never comprehensively recorded. We can gain some notion of these from specific decisions of the Board; but it is only since 1880, that a more exact and detailed study has been possible since all the Minute Books beginning with that date are available.

Admission

Three expressions are regularly used in the Minute Books, "received as an orphan," "bound to the orphanage", and "taken in as a boarder." The term "bound to the orphanage" occurs in the records of the first year. It meant the child was admitted only on the condition that the Board received full parental authority over the same until it was of age. This system offered the child considerable protection and was appreciated especially in instances where a return to the parental roof would have been detrimental to the child. For example, one girl was bound to the Home by her dying father who was anxious to protect her religion from the influence of Protestant relatives who were only too willing to care for her. (Personal communication).

However, many cases are recorded in which the Board relinquished this right with the improvement of conditions at home. This unrestricted power of placing the child at will was later transferred entirely to the courts, thereby eliminating the necessity of binding the child to the Home. After 1881 it no longer appears in the Minute Books.

The "Boarders" were those children in the orphanage whose parents or relatives paid a monthly fee for their support. The sum varied from \$3.00—7.00, the average being \$5.00. In cases of need the Board admitted the child unconditionally as the records show. "The children N.... shall be taken in free of charge. Mother incurable in the hospital, father mentally unsound. They have eight children recommended through the Children's Aid Association." There are many similar instances. Should it, however, prove that the parents were merely shirking and neglectful in their payment then the Board could become very energetic. In that case the children had to be taken out, or the older ones were retained.

The expression "admitted as orphans" does not appear in the early records. It seems these children were taken in free of charge, but not bound to the Home. They were probably entrusted to the Home through a branch of the St. Vincent's Orphan Society paying \$5.00 monthly to help defray expenses for the child.

No child was admitted without the consent of the Board of Managers. In cases of urgent necessity, the president or secretary could give permission.

Beginning with the year 1884, our Home opened its doors to German Catholic children from 2 to 11 years of age, who had been in the Philadelphia Almshouse. The city granted a weekly allowance of \$1.75 for each child. This arrangement was the beginning of a change in St. Vincent's purely parochial character.

In admitting a child, little regard was paid to his age; thus we find children of even one or two months were admitted. In 1902 a resolution was adopted not to receive a child under two years of age.

Discharge and Aftercare

The condition of admission directly influenced the discharge of a child from the Home. Boarders were usually returned to their parents. In 1891 the Board decided, to dismiss the children after their First Holy Communion, which at that time was in their twelfth year. Regarding the boys, that age limit had been definitely determined upon as early as 1876. The regulations of both years, aim to have the children leave the Home after completing the elementary school. With the compulsory prolongation of the elementary school course, the age limit was also raised to 14 years. Regarding the future of a child, a real responsibility rested upon the Board only regarding the children "bound to the Home." The girls because of their usefulness about the house were detained until they were eighteen and then entrusted to good private families. They were to receive at least \$2.00 per week, which was held by the Board until the girl was of age.

Boys were apprenticed as journeymen to good Catholic persons. Most of them became bakers, gardeners, tailors and barbers. There was a constant demand for boys. In the "Nord-Amerika" we find only two instances of the Board advertising that it wished to place several boys to learn such trades. The conditions respecting their training period were determined by contract before a notary public. Some of these may still be seen in the archives of the Board. One of the year 1880, for example, tells us of a Jos. G. Messenger, 14 years old, who is to be taught "in the art, trade, and mystery of barbering," by a Mr. A. F. Marsh. The conditions of employment were as follows: For the first two years, the boy shall receive board and clothing only; for the third year the master must pay \$36, which would be increased to \$48 for the following year. These two sums go to the Board. For the fifth year the boy is to receive \$60 to be kept by himself. No boy could be placed out without the permission of the pastor in whose parish he was to live. Furthermore, a member of the Board was appointed guardian of the child and the records show that these duties were taken very seriously.

With the rise of Catholic Continuation and Vocational Schools, the above mentioned methods were abandoned. St. Francis' Industrial School for Boys in Eddington, the foundation of the Drexels, played an important role in placing boys. The names of the candidates had to be sent directly to the Archbishop who then provided for their ad-

mission. The first group, composed of six was admitted on April 12, 1885.

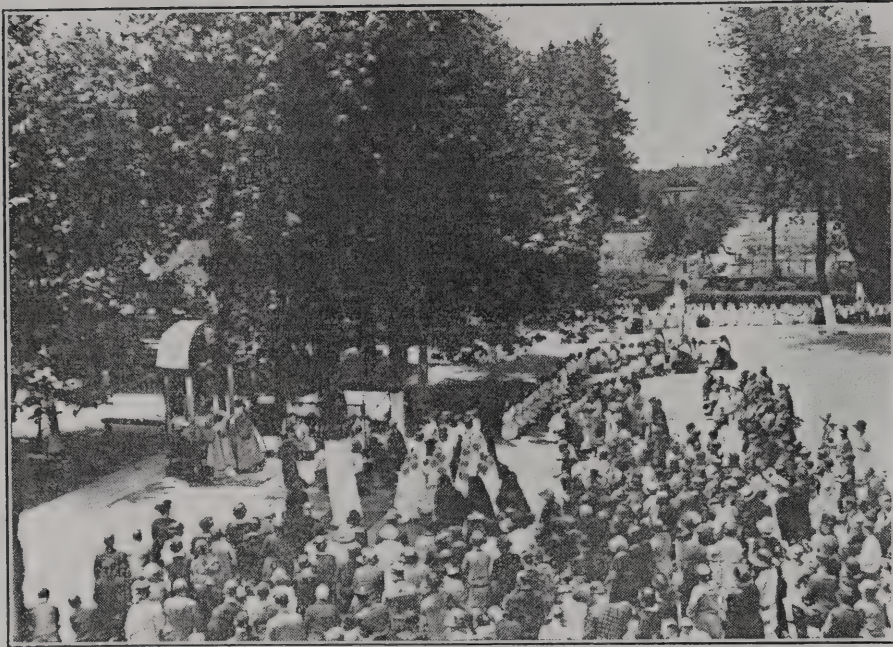
The placing of children in foster homes was also very frequent during the early part of this period. Children placed in such private homes were often "bound" to these families, which means that the heads of these families exercised full parental authority over the child. Sometimes the "binding to" was akin to adoption. In that case, the Board required that a child be made legal heir before it could be adopted by the family.

Memorable were a number of cases, in which sick children were taken back and carefully nursed by the sisters, sometimes for years. It is really striking to read, how some of these children asked permission to pass the last few years of their lives in the Home since they wanted to die there and nowhere else. If wishes like these are made and granted, then the Home has really become father and mother to the child. No greater test can be made. (See Appendix).

RELIGIOUS TRAINING

The religious spirit and training dominant in the orphanage during the first 25 years of its existence reflects entirely the spirit of Sister Regina, its superior until 1896. It is a spirit of simple but strong faith. The following report was left us by a sister who had been stationed at St. Vincent's from 1875-1888. "In the morning the sister in charge entered the dormitory and called the little sleepers with the ejaculation, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph" to which the orphans responded "I give you my heart and my soul." Then the older ones would rise, dress quickly, and help get the little ones ready. At half past six they went to the chapel for morning prayers, remaining until after mass which began an hour later. All prayers were said in German. After the morning session of school, which closed at 11:30 o'clock, the children made a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and recited the prayers composed by St. Alphonsus Ligouri. As a rule, there was spiritual reading during the entire course of the meal both at noontime and in the evening." This same religious, almost monastic, spirit permeated the working hours which prescribed the reciting of many a prayer said aloud. "At 5 o'clock the rosary was recited in common in the chapel. Supper was served a half hour later, then all assembled again in the chapel for prayer in honor of the Precious Blood. If the weather permitted it, this devotion was held in the open walking up and down the yard. Naturally, parish services were also attended by the children. Night prayers were always said in the chapel. They went to confession and received Holy Communion once a month".

Although there was great lack of priests at that time, the Board was very fortunate to obtain the constant services of a priest from the beginning of the Home. This circumstance made it possible to develop the child's spiritual training in accordance with the feasts and periods of the ecclesiastical year. We know of only one instance that the sisters and children walked to St. Dominic's Church in Holmesburg to assist at Mass on Sunday. The most beloved and highly celebrated feast of the year was that of Corpus Christi. It is recorded for the first time in the year 1859. In the following year, we find the first report in the "Catholic Herald" of June 11th.



CORPUS CHRISTI CELEBRATION. (1925)

"CELEBRATION OF CORPUS CHRISTI IN TACONY"

"Last Thursday, June 7th, being the festival of Corpus Christi, was celebrated at Tacony, — St. Vincent's German Asylum, — in a manner customary to Catholic countries in Europe. On the grounds were upwards of fifteen hundred persons, both children and adults. At 10 o'clock, Solemn High Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Mr. Zwickert, assisted by Rev. Mr. Fehlings, Rev. Mr. Dausch of St. Peter's and Rev. Mr. McNaughton, of St. Joseph's, Philadelphia. Rev. Mr. Fehlings addressed us in German, in a simple but touching style. He alluded to the manner in which this Feast is celebrated in our native countries. Many recollections, no doubt, were recalled among those present of their younger days, as they celebrated this great Feast in Europe, and their hearts may have rejoiced to witness the same festival now celebrated in their adopted country. Immediately after the High Mass, the congregation was addressed by Rev. Mr. Dausch in English. The Rev. speaker dwelt principally on the Feast we were celebrating, and spoke his great pleasure in witnessing how the German Catholics were endeavoring to transplant their religious festivals to the country of their choice, and celebrating them in public, as they were used to do at home. After the sermon of Father Dausch, the procession took place on the roads and meadows surrounding the Orphan Asylum. Five Altars were erected, and at each of them the Gospel was read and Solemn Benediction given.

Heading the procession were the school-boys with lights and banners; then the school-girls; then the single men and single la-

dies; then the band; then came the Clergy, under a baldachino with the Sacred Host. In front of the Clergy went little girls, dressed in white, strewing flowers. After the Clergy came the married men; and last of all the married women concluding the procession. All walked two by two. Having arrived at the main Altar, where we started from erected near the Asylum, Solemn Benediction was given again and the congregation dismissed.

The rest of the day was enjoyed by the children who had come from the city, in playing with their little orphan brothers and sisters. Touching, indeed, it was to see the children play together and how some of the little orphans called the other children "brother" and "sister". Who can tell whether some of these brothers and sisters may not be living next Corpus Christi with their little orphan brothers and sisters. And therefore, in conclusion, fellow-German Catholics, do your utmost to raise the necessary funds to enlarge the Asylum. You know the sum required, and when all help together, no one hurts his pocket, and nobody will feel the expense.

A German".

The Corpus Christi celebration seems to be the only extraordinary feast held at the Home.

In 1860 the new chapel was opened. With it was also combined the reception of First Holy Communion for the children of the Home. The class of this year was the first to celebrate this feast in the Home. Confirmation was administered for the first time in 1863 to 15 children in All Saints Church, Bridesburg. From the following years until 1872, the children went to the various German churches of the City. In 1872, Bishop Wood came to Tacony. After the service he personally gave a present to each child confirmed.

The Forty Hours Devotion began at the Home in the year 1863.

During this period, also, the sisters of Notre Dame stationed in Philadelphia usually held their retreat in Tacony. The strict silence, the zeal and earnestness of these days must have made a deep impression on the children. Several times the children likewise had a three-days retreat given by the retreat master of the sisters. The first one was given in 1876 by Father Eberhardt, C. SS. R., from November 5—9.

The example of the sisters attracted many girls to convent life. Naturally, most of them joined the Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. A list of all the girls that entered the sisterhood will be found in a special appendix.

EDUCATION

The German Roman Catholic St. Vincent's School Society had promised in its initial publication the erection of "a large Boarding School." The nature of the plans hidden behind this name can no longer be ascertained. Only the fact remains that school was begun in the same year in which the Home was opened. In school we find the orphans, and the children of St. Vincent's parish and some from the neighboring parishes. It must be remembered that until 1903 St. Vincent's was the only Catholic School in Tacony.

During the first years, one teacher sufficed for all classes. The present reception parlor then served as the only classroom. In 1862, school was held in what is now the meeting room for the managers, and which previously had been the chapel. With the completion of the Northern wing in 1866, two of the rooms now occupied by the chaplain were reserved as classrooms. This division of classes gave rise to the terms "big" and "little" school. In 1874 we find the school on the second floor of the same wing. Another room on the third floor was added in 1879, when 67 day pupils asked for admission. Henceforth the House Chronicle distinguished a first, second and third school. The benches for this new room were supplied by St. Peter's. Mr. Belfield had made those of the other rooms. They were long benches made to accommodate from 6 to 8 children.

The best known teacher of this period is Sister Virgilia Stratman who was at the home from 1862—1896. Besides teaching in the upper grades, this sister also gave music instructions and drilled the children for the plays which they presented from time to time.

We know but little regarding the textbooks used, the subjects taught, and methods employed. At the New Year's greeting of 1863 Father Carbon presented the children with Mitchell's Geography. For many years, the "School Encyclopedia" composed by School Sisters of Notre Dame, served as the official text book.* It is printed in double columns giving both the German and English text. It comprises 121 pages and treats of Grammar, Natural History, Geography and History. A religious spirit permeates the book. The following examples will show this:

Page 38 — What benefits does God bestow on us by means of the vegetable kingdom?

From it we obtain food, clothing, habitation, warmth, articles of trade, medicine, health, pleasure and instruction.

Page 62 — What productions has God given to each zone?

The wise Creator has given to each zone those productions which are most useful to it. The Torrid Zone produces everything in exuberance, since man cannot labor much in those countries on account of the great heat. There may be found the nutritious bread fruit tree, cooling fruits of all kinds, spices to season food, beautiful animals, gold, silver and precious stones, for ornament. To the Temperate Zones, whose inhabitants must perform hard labor, the all wise Creator has given the laboring horses and oxen, many other animals with nutritious flesh, the woolly sheep, strengthening corn and vegetables, enlivening wine, and excellent iron. In the Frigid Zones, the vegetable kingdom is poor; God has, however, furnished its inhabitants with an abundance of fishes and wild beasts, and especially with such animals, whose skins serve as a protection against the cold.

We read of the first examination on July 19, 1866. It was held by Father D. Dycker, C. SS. R., Rector of St. Peter's, in the presence of several priests. As a reward, he presented the children with little framed pictures. On the same day a four week vacation began, being a week longer than usual.

*The full title of the book is "School Encyclopedia for the Use of Beginners in the German and English Languages by the School Sisters de Notre Dame". We used the eighth edition, which appeared in Milwaukee, Wis., in 1884, Deuster & Company, which was kindly lent to us by Sister M. Cortona, SS. N. D.

A state examination is mentioned in 1870 given by the "School Director of the Soldiers Orphans Schools of Penna." in the presence of several members of the Board of Managers; the same gentleman also urged the Home to participate in the Centennial Exposition of 1876. A certain Mrs. E. E. Hutler suggested the following be sent to the Exposition:—Specimens of penmanship in German and English; Compositions; Lessons in Geography, History of the United States and Arithmetic; a large embroidered bed-spread, two tidies stitched with cotton; two with zephyr; a hair-crown; a boy's shirt; a pair of girl's leggings; handmade stockings. On October 24th, 1876, 92 orphans and 9 day-scholars visited the Centennial Exposition under the supervision of two candidates and 6 members of the Board. They left Tacony by train at 9 o'clock and returned at seven in the evening "with great joy and enthusiasm."

A year prior to this celebration, we hear for the first time of an important factor in Education,—Theatricals. Each New Year's Day since 1875, the entire Board of Managers was invited to attend a show given for them by the children as an expression of gratitude. This event became an annual affair until 1912. Within a very short time the children progressed so well, that they expanded their field of activity. On April 2 and 3, 1877, two sisters went with 29 pupils to St. Peter's where the children gave "two dramas besides several comedies." "The Battle of St. Aloysius to Enter the Society"; "The Redeemed Honor of the German"; "Broom Peddler"; "Cramming is Ill Feeding"; "The Irish Granny O'Flannigan." The first two were given in German; the others in English. The entertainment lasted until 10 P. M. Some of the children remained with their parents or relatives for the night, while the others went back with the sisters in a wagon, arriving at midnight. Since 1881, the yearly entertainment for the Board was repeated for the relatives and friends of the children and also for the members of the parish.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Outside of school hours the older children were also trained to help in the work about the house. It was their home and under the supervision and cooperation of the sisters, they helped to keep it in order. Thus, even today, we find both boys and girls daily cleaning the rooms, making beds, and washing dishes, for St. Vincent's never employed servants.

According to a circular of 1876 (see p. 28) girls were kept until 18 years of age, boys until they were 12. The reasons for the apparent favoritism towards the girls lies in the fact that they were needed for the housework which was all done by hand; especially the weekly washing which was very tiresome taking almost the whole week for its completion. Every Monday morning about twelve of the older girls and several sisters got up at 3 o'clock. Each piece of laundry had to be rubbed by hand, and their number seemed infinite. But according to the testimony of several girls of that period, they liked to do it, because on this day they received a good breakfast, bread and butter with "hot dogs" or eggs. "And what didn't we do for a hot dog."

Dinner and supper were also better than usual. After the three days of washing, the ironing, sewing and mending still had to be done. For sixty years all dresses and suits were made in the home, a fact which accounts for their uniformity. Underwear and stockings were also made by hand. One former inmate of the Home claims that at the age of eight she could finish unaided an entire stocking. For so much work, much help was required, and it was found in the older girls. For that reason, also, the Home strove to retain them for a longer period.

This system, however, was discarded about 1914, when the sister in charge of the sewing room became seriously ill. Even at its best this system had grown obsolete due to the cheapened mass production of modern machinery. Since 1914 ready-made clothes took the place of the former handiwork.

The boys generally helped on the farm, painted the house, and kept the roads in order. To drive the priest to Bridesburg with horse and buggy found special favor with them. Sister Romana Gerlach was in charge of the boys for 30 years, 1864—1894.

The sisters gave the very best example in hard work. Many a night Sister Regina was still busy sewing long after the rest of the house had retired. Considering this arduous work, we readily understand the joy with which the sisters greeted each improvement that lightened their daily tasks. For example, the Sister who wrote the Chronicle did not fail to report, in 1877, how much easier it was for the sisters in the kitchen to bake bread in the new large oven. Up to that time all bread had to be baked daily in the kitchen stove. Now Sister Catherine Sugg, with the assistance of four girls had to bake only three times weekly. She was succeeded by Sr. Chrysanthie Fischer who carried on until 1909 from which time on, all bread was bought.

In past years the hard work in the kitchen had been further increased by other difficulties. Due to its location in the basement, the kitchen was subject to the regular floods of the Delaware. After a few days of heavy rainfall, the kitchen and cellar would be flooded with about a foot of water, which could not be removed by pumping because it was ground water, and disappeared only with the general fall of the water level. For years the sisters had to wear rubber boots while working in the kitchen. Naturally, this often caused rheumatism. With the invention of concrete, and the canalization of the Delaware, some relief was achieved. Perfect sanitary conditions were brought about in 1901 by the removal of the kitchen, pantry and dining room to the new building for boys.

PHYSICAL CARE

The selection of Tacony seemed ideal for the erection of an orphanage. The farm furnished the home with fresh vegetables, the eight cows supplied good milk, and more than 100 hens the necessary eggs. Its location on the Delaware made it a splendid bathing spot in the summer.* Besides there was plenty room for playing.

*With the erection of factories along the Delaware above the Home, bathing was no longer possible.

Nevertheless, the Home was frequently stricken with epidemics. In almost every other year of this first period a large number of the children became seriously ill. The first contagious disease mentioned was eczema (see p. 32) which proved so annoying, that it partially occasioned the withdrawal of the Franciscan Sisters. Besides the skin disease, other maladies common to childhood, such as measles and diphtheria, also frequently invaded the Home. The House Chronicle of 1862 reports that 30 children suffered from diphtheria. "They were treated by a doctor, but his medicine had no effect. The children were cured by a home made remedy prepared by the sisters." In 1877, thirty-two children were stricken with scarlet fever. It proved fatal in only one case. Typhoid Fever was rampant in the Home in 1864. It made its appearance again in 1869 with the admission of a boy and girl whose mother had died of it and whose brothers and sisters were sick with the measles. The boy fell sick during his first week in the Home. His sister also succumbed to measles and nervous fever. The latter disease infected 22 other children.* The worst enemy of the children was an eye infection (ophthalmia) brought into the Asylum by two boys received from the Philadelphia Almshouse, where for many years this eye disease had been a heavy cross. St. Vincent's House Chronicle gives us a vivid description of the suffering introduced with the admission of these two boys.

"Although a special towel and a special wash-basin was provided for them, the other children were soon afflicted. When a few were healed, others got it, and thus, it continued until all the children were soon infected. A girl of six years lost an eye. Neither were the sisters, who had to care for the children immune. The candidate Johanna Beegly suffered most severely. For six weeks the doctor was unable to examine her eye due to the size of the boil. When she could open it, the eye had suffered badly. With this one exception everyone recovered."

The disease however, was very tenacious, affecting each child after its admission to the Home. The Board, thereupon, decided to suspend the reception of children until everyone had been cured, and demanded that all applicants present an authoritative certificate stating they were free from contagious diseases.

This eye disease was known in European asylums as well as in American institutions. It was caused chiefly by the use of the same towels and wash-basins by several children.**

The sanitary conditions of those times cannot bear comparison with those of today. Bath rooms, showers, etc. were unknown to the institutions of that date. In 1869, the Home received its first bath tub. According to old traditions children were bathed in wash tubs and barrels. Plumbing was unknown. Wash water had to be carried out as there was no drainage system in the house. It is only a short time since conditions have changed, even in the cities. Modern improvements, such as drainage and modern plumbing, did much to conquer the epidemics. Both were installed in 1884. It was the year in which a "hos-

*Diseases listed as Billious Fever, Nervous Fever, Inflammation of the Lungs, Dropsy of the Chest and disease of the Liver all are ambiguous terms unknown to modern medicine. (Phila. Public Ledger, July 26, 1932).

** See Dr. J. Gerlach, "Das Waisenhaus in Darmstadt", Langensalza 1929 p. 74.

pital" was also opened. Since that time epidemics have been less frequent. Prompt isolation and modern medicine have contributed much in conquering them. About 1910, conditions at St. Vincent's had reached such a high standard, that its sanitary status placed it above all similar institutions in Pennsylvania.

FEAST DAYS

The simplicity of German home life that was characteristic of the Home during the years in which Sister Regina guided its destinies, also manifested itself on the feast days of the Home. The sister who gave us so much insight into the lives of the orphans tells us—"St. Nicholas Day, December 6, was always a day of much happiness and rejoicing. With mingled feelings we assembled in the dining hall and St. Nicholas would announce his arrival by pounding loudly on the door and ringing a large bell. His back was bent under the huge sack filled with all kinds of goodies, which he would later throw to us. The braver ones who stooped down to pick them up, usually got more than they had expected. The more timid ones received the goodies in their hands."

"Christmas Day was also one of joy. Each child received a plate full of candies, nuts, home-made cookies, an orange, an apple, and something useful to wear such as a cap or a pair of mittens which the good Sister Virgilia had taught us to crochet. We had three Christmas trees in the dining room, each reaching from the floor to the ceiling. Sister Catherine Sugg tried very hard to make us happy on Christmas and Easter. As a rule, we had turkey for dinner, a gift from kind people. I can still taste the good cookies Sister Catherine made for us before Christmas, in the form of men on horseback, animals, birds, stars, etc. and which were covered with a pink and white sugar coating."

"On its Namesday, each child was permitted to go to Sister Regina with the reminder, "Sister, today is my namesday." It would then receive a stick of candy and a pretty picture from her. God bless the dear good soul of Sister Regina."

CHAPTER V.

ST. VINCENT'S AS A PARISH, 1865-1899 ST. VINCENT'S CHURCH A MISSION OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH IN BRIDESBURG, 1863-1879



WITH the transfer of Father Mathias Meurer to All Saints in Bridesburg in 1863, St. Vincent's lost its character as an independent parish. This condition lasted for sixteen years, until in 1879 St. Vincent's received again a pastor of its own in Rev. Father Freude.

Parish life during this whole period was very quiet. In consequence of the combination of orphanage and parish, the financial obligations of the parishioners were very light. The children attended the orphan's school; the pastor lived in Bridesburg; the salary for his services in St. Vincent's was paid by the Board of Managers, which likewise defrayed all expenses of church and school. In return, the orphanage received all collections, which at their best scarcely ever covered the expenses. These conditions explain, why a strong, self-sustaining parish life could not develop. Another reason was, that most pastors served only a short time. Father Meurer was appointed to Ashland, Pa. in 1868. He was succeeded by

Rev. Bernard A Baumeister, 1868-1869

Father Baumeister was born January 6, 1843, at Muenster, Westphalia, Germany. In September 1862, he came to America, and after completing his theological studies, he was ordained to the priesthood by the Most Rev. J. F. Wood on November 17, 1865. From November 1868 to August 1869, he was given charge of St. Vincent's. In September 1872, he was appointed to Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia, remaining there as pastor until November 1874. In both positions he worked for the welfare of the orphan asylum, which during these years shared to some extent in the business revival of the time. Father Baumeister died January 17, 1911, as pastor of St. Anthony's Church, Decoursey, Ky.

Rev. Herman Deppman, 1869-1872

Like his predecessor, Father Deppman was born in Muenster, Westphalia, on July 9, 1841. In September 1862, he came to the United States and was ordained in Philadelphia, February 2, 1864. Bishop Wood sent him to All Saints Church in Bridesburg, August 1869, where he remained until August 1872, when he was transferred to Pottsville, Pa. In 1878 he entered the Franciscan Order, receiving the name P. Boniface. Until his death, April 4, 1912, he was stationed in the monastery of his Order, St. Joseph's in Cleveland, Ohio, where for several years he served as vicar.

As chaplain of St. Vincent's, he saw many minor improvements about the house. Shortly before he left, a new organ valued at \$750.00 was placed in the chapel by the Board of Managers.

Rev. Rudolf Kuenzer, 1872-1874

Young Father Deppman was succeeded by Father Kuenzer, an aged venerable priest who had labored strenuously in the vineyard of the Lord, and was now approaching his eternal reward. Born May 12, 1828, in Breisach, Baden, Germany, he came to America in 1853, and was ordained in the same year, June 25, 1853 by Bishop Neumann, who appointed him to York, Pa. Two years later he became pastor of St. Paul's Church, Reading, Pa. where he remained until 1860. Reading numbered at that time 40,000 inhabitants, but had only one Catholic Church and Father Kuenzer had no assistant. In 1860 he was appointed to the Sacred Heart Church in Allentown, Pa. where he had charge of six missions. This strenuous work ruined his health. In 1862 he was appointed rector of St. Mary's in Manayunk, Phila. where he built a new school. He had done the same in Reading. In 1869 he became seriously ill and went to Europe to recover his health. The whole parish with all its societies and school children, accompanied him in solemn procession to the railroad station, and received him in like manner when he returned. After his return, he was appointed to Holy Trinity Church, but he asked to be sent to a country parish, and was therefore given charge of All Saints, Bridesburg, where he died February 20, 1874. Father Kuenzer was not able to do much for his last parish. He was almost continuously sick and the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Peter's provided for the spiritual needs of St. Vincent's, as they had done so often in the past.

Rev. Hermann Diederich, 1874

Father Kuenzer's successor, the Rev. H. Diederich remained in All Saint's only from February until November 11, 1874. Born July 6, 1845 in Mettinghausen, Diocese Paderborn, Germany, he entered in 1869 the American Seminary at Muenster, Westphalia and was ordained there May 14, 1871. In September of the same year he came to America and was appointed assistant to St. John's Church, Pottsville, and in February 1873, to St. Boniface, Philadelphia. In 1874, he was appointed pastor of All Saints, Bridesburg, but was called in the same year to the rectorship of the Sacred Heart Church in Allentown. In 1876 he was transferred to St. Fidelis Church in Mahanoy City, Pa., where he remained until his death November 17, 1903. Long and serious illness made the accomplishment of his priestly duties very difficult, but he was faithful to the end. A friend summed up his beautiful characteristics in these words: "Fidelitas Germana, Sagacitas Americana et Pietas Sacerdotalis." "With German fidelity you united American business acumen and priestly piety."

Rev. John Frederic Fechtel, 1874-1879

When Father Diederich left in the winter of 1874, he was succeeded by the Rev. John F. Fechtel. Father Fechtel was born Decem-

ber 15, 1840 in Muehlheim, Diocese of Paderborn, Germany. He came to America in 1866 and was ordained March 18, 1868. Until 1872 he was assistant at St. Joseph's Easton, Pa. and from 1872-1874 assistant to Monsignor Bornemann in St. Paul's, Reading, Pa. In November 1874, he was appointed to All Saints in Bridesburg, where he remained thirteen years. In 1887 he was transferred to the Annunciation Church, Catasauqua, Pa., where he remained only two years. Due to ill health he resigned his rectorship and a few years later returned to Europe where he died December 23, 1904.

ST. VINCENT'S REGAINS INDEPENDENCE

During the term of Father Fechtel's rectorship both Tacony and Bridesburg partook in the steady progress of industrial life along the Delaware. Disston, gradually followed by others, began erecting large factories in 1872. The working men, many of whom were of Irish descent, naturally settled in Tacony. Most of them attended the services in St. Vincent's although they belonged to St. Dominic's Holmesburg. Those mentioned most frequently in the Registers are the many branches of the Brophy, Clark and Delany families.*

Rev. John G. Freude, 1879-1899

This increase of the population multiplied the labors of the pastor in Bridesburg correspondingly. Rev. Fechtel, therefore, asked Bishop Wood to give him an assistant, or to again make St. Vincent's an independent parish. The bishop granted the latter by appointing the Rev. John G. Freude. He arrived on the First Friday of November 1879, on which day the devotions in honor of the Sacred Heart were to be introduced at St. Vincent's. All day, the sisters and the orphans had kept hours of adoration asking primarily for a good priest exclusively for the Home. Towards the evening Father Freude arrived with the news of his appointment. (See Appendix). It seemed like a miracle, and one need not be surprised that Father Freude was loved from the first day. He was a very quiet man, full of great charity and unassuming kindness. For twenty-two years he directed the parish and imbued it with that spirit of unity and solidity which is characteristic of it today.

Born on March 18, 1824, in Laggenbeck near Bueren, Westphalia, he made his theological studies at the American College in Louvain, Belgium. On June 18, 1859 he was ordained in Muenster, and came to America in 1870 where he was accepted by Bishop Wood of Philadelphia. For two years he worked at St. Peter and Paul in Lehighton, and was then appointed pastor of St. Boniface in St. Clair, Pa. where he remained the following seven years. Then he became pastor of St. Vincent's, Tacony.

St. Leo's Church Founded in 1884

Amongst the working men in the new industrial plants, we find

*Brophy-Maher; Brophy-McGinty; Clark-Murphy; Clark-Powers; Clark-Burns; Clark-McBride. Besides these the names of the Fullham and Costigan families appear frequently. Fullham-Sullivan; Fullham-McCugall; Costigan-Purcell; Costigan-Scott, etc.


many of Irish origin numbering approximately 150 families in 1884. St. Vincent's Chapel became too small. This, together with the fact that Father Freude clung tenaciously to the use of the German language and that St. Dominic's in Holmesburg was too far away, were the main reasons why in 1884, the administrator of the Diocese, Msgr. Walsh, appointed Father Joseph Strahan to build a church for the English speaking Catholics in Tacony. It was called St. Leo's Church and is located on Keystone and Unruh Streets. About 100 orphans and quite a number of the members of St. Vincent's church led by the Metropolitan music band, marched to the corner-stone laying. For a long time after, they probably told how a scaffold occupied by about fifty spectators crashed precipitating its occupants into the basement. However, none were seriously hurt.

After this division only thirty-four German families were left at St. Vincent's. They contributed according to their means, but a real parish life could not develop with such a small number, even after Father Freude had been given charge of all collections. Among the special activities of later years are the two missions preached by the Redemptorist Fathers, the first in 1887, and the second in 1889.

Being in very poor health and ailing for many years, Father Freude decided to pass the evening of his life in Germany. He resigned in 1899. On May 26, 1900, he died at Tillbeck near Muenster, Westphalia, of a heart attack. On May 30, a solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated for him in the Orphan Asylum with Archbishop Prendergast presiding. Many priests attended to do him honor. To the present day all those who knew Father Freude speak of him only with greatest love and respect. Girls of the orphanage still praise his zeal for monastic life. He fostered religious vocations whenever he could, even paying the dowry for girls who entered the convent.

PART III

THE COMING OF A NEW ERA, 1900-1933

HE history of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum is a mirror of the development of German Catholicism in Philadelphia. The plans and endeavors of German Catholicism, its rise and its decline, its need and its prosperity influenced decidedly the development of the orphanage in the past decades. It has continued to do so until the present day.

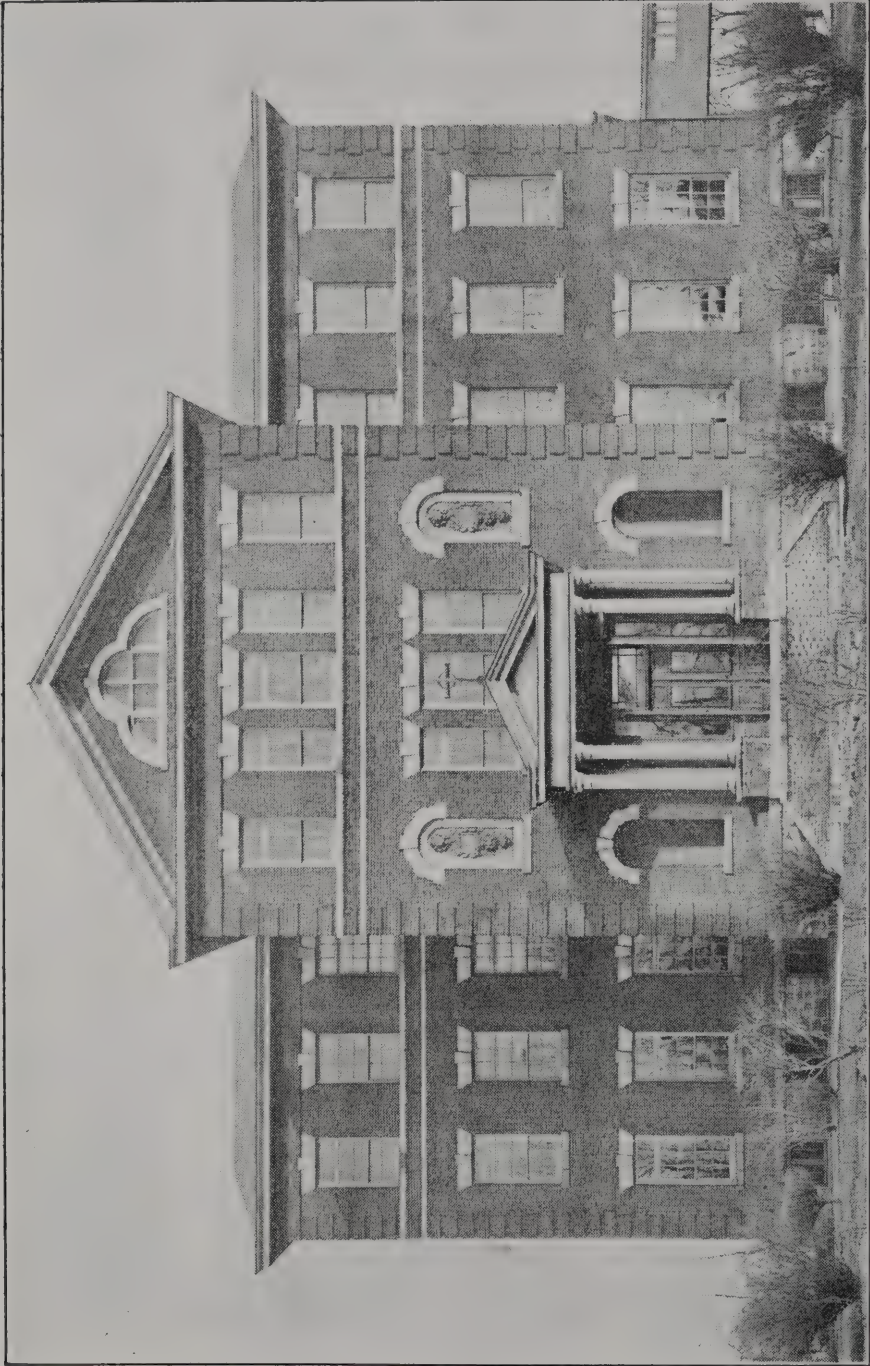
German immigration reached the lowest point in 1898, because at that time the cheap land in America had disappeared and the development of the German Empire as an industrial nation had increased opportunities at home.

With this pronounced decrease of immigration, the expansion of German Catholicism came to a standstill. In 1894, St. Aloysius' Parish had been founded for the Southwestern part of the city. It was not until twenty-one years later, that St. Henry's was established in Northern Philadelphia in 1915. Its first pastor, the zealous and capable Father Koenes is still in charge. Since then all expansion has ceased. One church, St. Ignatius, was given in 1928 to a Catholic Negro Congregation. Other parishes declined in importance because many of their members moved to newer residential sections of the city and were absorbed by English speaking congregations.

Through the World War the different nationalities in America merged into one. It completed the rapid formation of the American national spirit which began in 1898 with the Spanish-American War.

After the World War, immigration came to a complete standstill. As a consequence, the so-called national churches have become more and more Americanized. While in former years most services were held in the mother tongue, it has become an exception today when on Sunday more than one sermon is preached in German and a rarity, indeed, if German is still taught in school. It will, therefore, be but a matter of time when the Germans as a distinct people like many others, will lose this characteristic, although their distinguishing qualities will long survive this extinction. This cessation and transition of German Catholicism before and after the great war, also characterizes the development of the Home in this last period.

This development, however, was not apparent at once. At the beginning of the 20th Century, German speaking Catholics were in better financial condition than ever. They had worked themselves out of the poverty of their pioneer days and had begun to prosper. Evidences of this are their many parish buildings, which arose at the beginning of this century. St. Vincent's profited by the financial progress and erected its largest and finest building in 1901.



DORMITORY FOR BOYS, BUILT IN 1901

CHAPTER I

EXTERNAL HISTORY OF ST. VINCENT'S, 1900-1919

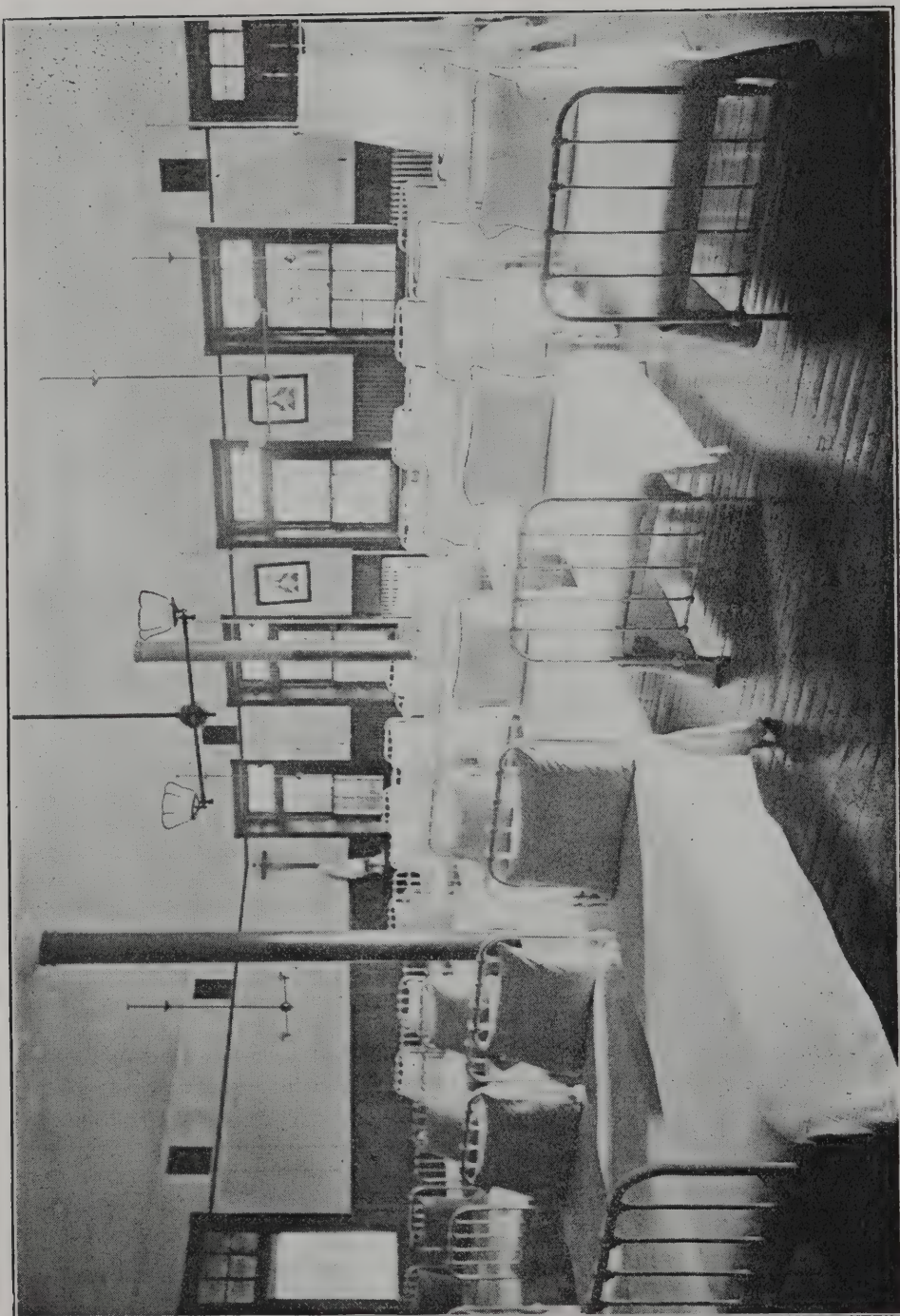
THE NEW DORMITORY FOR BOYS

FOUR years after the completion of the school building the Home had again become so crowded that the members of the Board were urged on all sides to erect another and larger building. We get an idea of the crowded condition and also of the low standards in years past when we read that an official from Harrisburg considered in 1877 the centre building capable of housing 250 children. Today we require four buildings for a smaller number.

In 1900, plans for the new building were carefully worked out. It was decided to make it the finest and largest one of the group. Mr. George C. Dietrich was selected contractor and architect. The plans were drawn, the financial matters had been arranged to the smallest detail when the undertaking was robbed of one of its staunchest and most capable supporters, by the unexpected death of Mr. Herman Weweler, for twenty-eight years a member of the Board and its treasurer for seventeen years. Only four hours before his death, he had asked the secretary, Mr. John Kieffer, to arrange the books, but they were in perfect order.

The Golden Jubilee Book describes the Dormitory as follows: "The new building is a massive structure, 45 feet wide and 90 feet long. It is three stories high and built in the plain old colonial style. It is situated near the main building partly in front of the laundry. The 16 by 35 foot frontage, projecting from the main facade, contains a vestibule, as also the stairway which leads to the upper floor. On the first floor of the annex, projecting from the rear 35 by 45 feet, are the kitchen and dining rooms. The second and third floors above the kitchen contain several private rooms, toilet rooms and bathrooms on each side of the corridor and on each floor at the extreme end, there are seven small bath rooms for the children's use. The little one story annex on the east side of the building is the sisters' refectory, which connects with kitchen and dining rooms. Above this refectory is a piazza. On the first floor are two large spacious dining rooms for the children, provided with portable partitions. The corresponding rooms above on the second and third floors, are used as dormitories for the boys."

"All rooms, corridors, stairways, etc. in the building have a wainscoting four and a half feet high. The windows are provided with Venetian blinds and transoms, the latter affording excellent ventilation. The interior woodwork is of chestnut. The partitions of the dining rooms and dormitories are 8 feet high. The first floor of



SLEEPING APARTMENT

the building is 14 feet and the second and third stories each 12 feet in height."

"Toward the rear of the building is a fire tower joined to the second and third stories by means of iron platforms and railings, the whole serving as a fire escape. The stairway in the vestibule is broad and open. The inside walls are provided with ventilation shafts that reach to the roof. These shafts provide each room with excellent ventilation. The entire building is heated by hot water and lighted by gas."

"In the construction of the building, from the foundation to the second story, Holmesburg Granite was used; the other parts being of brick. The water pipes are of copper, and the roofs are slated. The projections, encasings and trimmings are of terra cotta; the granite stairs lead to the main entrance, the vestibule has a mosaic pavement."

"This new structure," writes Dr. Bernt in the Golden Jubilee Book, "is evidently one equipped with the most modern improvements in regard to heating, ventilation and health." The reporter of the Nord Amerika adds that the new structure is "so perfect in ventilation and so comfortable in its accommodations, that it could not be surpassed."

Though the passing of time moderated this estimation, it is still a splendid building. Its advantages for the Home were many. For the first time in its history, it gave to the Orphanage sufficient room, for it did away with overcrowding of the boys in the old dormitories and the evil consequences thereof. The eye troubles disappeared completely. Meals could be eaten in comfort and without any haste in the large dining rooms. Formerly dinner had to be taken in a triple shift within the short allowance of an hour. Another advantage was the complete separation of boys and girls into two different buildings. The girls' living and play room was now moved from the upper floor of the school to the fourth floor of the centre building. Two floors were reserved for the nursery in the southern wing of the same structure.

Many celebrations were held in connection with the erection of the new building. There was first of all the ceremony of ground breaking in February, 1900. The laying of the cornerstone on May 6, 1901, was a very impressive ceremony. Bishop Prendergast officiated. He was received at the Railroad Station by the Board of Managers, and escorted to the Home in solemn procession. The music for the occasion was furnished by the Eddington Industrial School Band. After the blessing of the corner stone by His Excellency, Father Abt, the chaplain, preached so excellent a sermon that the sum of \$2,698.00 was realized in the collection taken up during the services. Eighteen priests were present besides many lay visitors. Dinner was served by the ladies of St. Boniface's parish after the services. They also had charge of the stands erected on the grounds. On Thanksgiving Day, 1901, the solemn blessing of the building took place. The Rev. Speidel, C.S.S.R., performed this ceremony in the presence of nine priests and many visitors. On March 19, 1902, the building was so far completed that the dining rooms could be used.

LADIES' AID SOCIETY



† Mrs. John F. Kieffer, *Foundress*
 Mrs. Lorenz Golz, *President* Mrs. Joseph Nesselhauf, *Vice President*
 Miss Lillie Becker, *Financial Secretary* Mrs. Fred Symank, *Recording Secretary*

The cost of the erection of the Dormitory amounted to \$36,485. The building committee was composed of the following: Messrs. William Krause, Henry Apeler, John Gaskemann and Franz Breitner. By wise management, they saved enough from the sum originally appropriated to install a new steam laundry. The washing machines were used for the first time in October 1901. The work which formerly required a week was now performed in a day. No one was more grateful for this saving of time and labor than the sisters.

In 1904, new toilets were erected on the grounds of the Home for the sum of about \$3,000. These various improvements relieved a dire necessity. The expenditure of over \$40,000 was a great financial strain on the Home. Not until 1918 was the new boys' building cleared of debt. It was, therefore, very fortunate that just in 1903 an organization was founded that was soon to become the greatest financial supporter of the Home in modern times.

THE LADIES' AID SOCIETY, 1903

Several years before its formation the founding of a Ladies' Auxiliary for St. Vincent's Orphanage was propagated. The driving force was Mrs. John F. Kieffer, who, also, with the consent of the Board, organized the new society, the second one in the history of St. Vincent's. On May 4, 1903, a number of ladies assembled at her home, where her husband, Mr. John F. Kieffer, in later years secretary of the Board of Managers, ably explained the purpose of the organization. Twenty-six ladies joined immediately. Mrs. Kieffer was elected President and Mrs. John Ostertag, Vice-President. The treasury was entrusted to Mrs. Charles Ehinger. Her daughter, Miss Emma Ehinger, was chosen as acting Secretary.

Besides those mentioned the following ladies belonged to the original group of members: Mesdames George Hatzold, Peter Lieb, Valentine Fassnacht, L. M. Kieffer, Frank Bango, Joseph Rettig, F. F. Drueding, F. Schute, George Dietrich, Henry Walter, Frank Kuhn, Frederick Kuhn, Julia Diller and the Misses Mabel Kieffer, Elizabeth Michel, Bernardine Drueding, Elizabeth Schute and Catherine Ostertag.

The organization of the society was simple, but judging from its history, very efficient. The membership fee is \$1.00 annually, or \$25 for life. The ladies who collect the yearly dues constitute what is known as the "Directorium." Their number is not limited. From this group, the five officials are elected. A financial secretary later increased the number to six. From 1903 until her death on June 21, 1932, Mrs. John F. Kieffer was a very capable President. Like unto the president, other officials were repeatedly reelected. Mrs. John Ostertag was Vice-President until her death on November 6, 1912. Her successor, Mrs. Nesselhauf still serves in this capacity. Mrs. Symank, who was elected Recording Secretary in 1916, still holds this office. Mrs. Lorenz Golz was Treasurer for 27 years, having succeeded Mrs. Ehinger. In 1932 she was elected President.

The membership of the Ladies' Auxiliary increased steadily. With 846 members in the first year, it enjoyed the reputation of being

the largest Catholic women's organization in the city. When the Society celebrated its Silver Jubilee, May 22, 1928, it numbered 1698 members.

The chief purpose of the Society is the financial support of the Home. Every year since its inception it has given \$1,000 on Donation Day, which means a total of \$29,000 to 1931. Besides this, the Society substantially supported the Home through gifts, such as dresses for girls, underwear, bedding and larger gifts at Christmas, Easter and for the summer time. As the members increased and financial conditions improved, the Ladies Aid also undertook greater tasks. Twice in 1915 and in 1928, the society had the chapel repainted. In 1919 — 1920 it had electricity installed in the boys' building at an expense of \$3,400. To help defray the cost of painting the same building, the ladies collected \$2,567 in 1922, and two years later had a modern toilet room installed on the second floor at an expense of \$3,445. In 1927, it supplied all the windows of the Home with screens at a cost of \$2,400. Since 1916 the society gave \$36,727 in cash to the Home. Included in this sum are \$16,000 for the Donation Days of this period. The money was acquired from the yearly membership dues of \$1.00 and from three yearly benefit affairs. They are a Kaffee Klatsch in the springtime, a Sauerkraut dinner in the autumn, both of which are held in the Home, and a Dance and Promenade in the wintertime. Besides its own, the society also supports all the other activities of the Asylum.

With the enumeration of its material support, the importance of the Auxiliary is by no means fully stated. Since the discontinuance of the Orphan Festivals, the Ladies' Aid was the main group to keep alive public interest in the Home. Quite exclusively it sponsored the public affairs for the institution, and by crossing the German parish lines it won many new friends for the Home, even among other denominations. The historian notes with interest the many gifts bequeathed to the Home by members of the Ladies' Aid.

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

OCTOBER 15, 1937

As early as 1906, there was much talk about the celebration of the Golden Jubilee. The Board of Managers wished to set the date for 1908, as the Silver Jubilee of 1883 would have suggested; but Father Hiltermann, who had taken great interest in local history, declared 1907 as the only acceptable date. He gained his point and the celebration, was set for that year. As has previously been shown, historically, this date was not justified.

The Messrs. Krause, Schmidt, Kieffer, Ostertag and Becker were entrusted with the preparations. Dr. Jos. Bernt, for many years editor of the "Nord-Amerika" and the "Philadelphia Volksblatt" volunteered to write a history of the Home. Before its publication all the members of the Board assembled to hear it read, also to make corrections wherever necessary. Through the corrections many valuable details were preserved which would otherwise have been for-

gotten and lost. The book carried the title "1857-1907. Golden Jubilee of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Tacony, Pennsylvania," Nord Amerika Print, 1006 N. 5th Street.

It comprises ninety-six pages, amongst them twenty-eight full page pictures. Five thousand copies were printed. Dr. Bernt wrote the history in German, the translation was made by the sisters of St. Vincent's. The book gives the history in both languages in parallel columns. Half of the space is used for advertisements leaving twelve pages in small print for the text. It is divided into three chapters dealing respectively with the "Management of the Home," "Church and School," and "Buildings." Supplementing each chapter we find in chronological order a list of the outstanding events which have reference to it. The style is that used by an able reporter, who, however, does not always refer to the original sources.

The celebration was held on Tuesday, October 15. The many visitors who had arrived by train, found the orphanage a mass of decorations. At the entrance a triumphal arch of pine branches crowned with a cross greeted the visitors. Over the chapel entrance shone a bright escutcheon with the inscription "Jubilare Deo." All the buildings were decorated with bunting in the papal colors. The celebration began with a Solemn High Mass at which the Rt. Rev. Bishop Prendergast presided. The Mass was celebrated by Father Henry Stommel of St. Alphonsus'. Fr. Hubert Hammeke of St. Bonaventura's and Fr. Deham of All Saints, Bridesburg, were the assistants. Fr. George Michel was Master of Ceremonies. Deacons of honor to the Bishop were Fr. Hiltermann of Holy Trinity and Father S. Breihof, C.S.S.R. of St. Boniface's. The sermon was preached by Monsignor Heinen, well known for his oratorical ability, his sanctity of life and his fruitful labors amongst the Slavs of the Diocese. It must have been a day of great joy for him to see again St. Vincent's where he had celebrated his first Mass in 1871. Besides those mentioned, twelve other clergymen were present in the sanctuary. The orphans sang a Gregorian Mass under the direction of Mr. Ebbecke, the parish organist. The chalice used at this Mass had been donated to the Home by Father Peter Carbon, one of the founders and the first president. Before giving his blessing, Rt. Rev. Bishop Prendergast expressed his sincere congratulations. Church services closed with a mighty "Te Deum."

In the basement of the centre building the orphans gave a hearty reception in honor of the guests. The program contained—

- 1—Greeting in German and English
- 2—Let us be joyful in the LordChoir
- 3—Welcomeby the little ones
- 4—WelcomeChoir
- 5—Declamation and Song50 boys
- 6—Jubilee Song50 girls
- 7—Festival Poem in German
- 8—Praise the LordChoir



DINING ROOM

The Rt. Rev. Bishop responded to this program with a very hearty address to the orphans; then the priests were escorted into the reception room for dinner. About 800 visitors had come to attend the celebration. Special mention must be made of Mr. John Brueckner, one of the first members of the Board of Managers and Mrs. August Budenz, one of the first orphans received into the Home and until her death a generous supporter of the Home.

PROGRESS DESPITE FINANCIAL WORRIES

The outlook for the future of the Home was bright in 1907, the year of the Golden Jubilee, because state support for its maintenance had been assured, but overwhelming apprehension caused by the panic in the autumn of the same year dispelled the jubilee joy. Many banks were forced to close their doors, and great stringency ensued.

Two years later a slight business boom occurred which at once showed its effects in the Home which received a number of gifts and legacies. A fire-tower was erected on the south side of the centre building, because the old fire escapes were in poor condition and the Board of Common Welfare insisted on greater security. Inmates of the House of Correction in Torresdale laid a new road to the Orphan Asylum, and erected at the main entrance a wall and an iron gate. Iron fences were also placed between the different buildings. A new heating plant had again become necessary for the centre building. In the chapel and many other rooms new floors were laid, and painting done. The roof was covered with asbestos shingles. Thus the whole house from the cellar to the roof was again in good order. For the babies a balcony was erected on the south side so that they could enjoy fresh air even on rainy days. Almost all of this work was done by the inmates of the House of Correction and was completed just before Christmas.

However, as the business boom of 1909 was only short lived, so also was the material progress of the Home. In its report of 1911, the Board laments the great lack of money which permitted neither necessary improvements nor the reception of more orphans. In 1912, attention was directed to the decrease of the monthly collections. At the same time the expenses of the Home were 20% higher than in past years on account of the general upward trend in prices. In 1900 the Board spent \$4,877 for food. In 1912, \$6,543.29 was required, the number of children being the same. Thus a striking disproportion resulted between income and expense.*

In 1914, money had to be borrowed to pay the current expenses. In its need, the Board turned to the Archbishop of the Diocese, the Most Rev. E. Prendergast, who declared his willingness to pay the deficit out of the charity fund of the diocese. The borrowing of money to liquidate debts and a direct appeal to the Diocese happened for the first time in the history of St. Vincent's. In the same year, we see from the "Report of the Commissioner of Charities of the Commonwealth of

*This need of increasing wages or reducing the cost of living was felt throughout the United States. It is easily proved by the election of Woodrow Wilson to the Presidency in 1913 on a platform demanding that measures be taken to reduce the high cost of living.

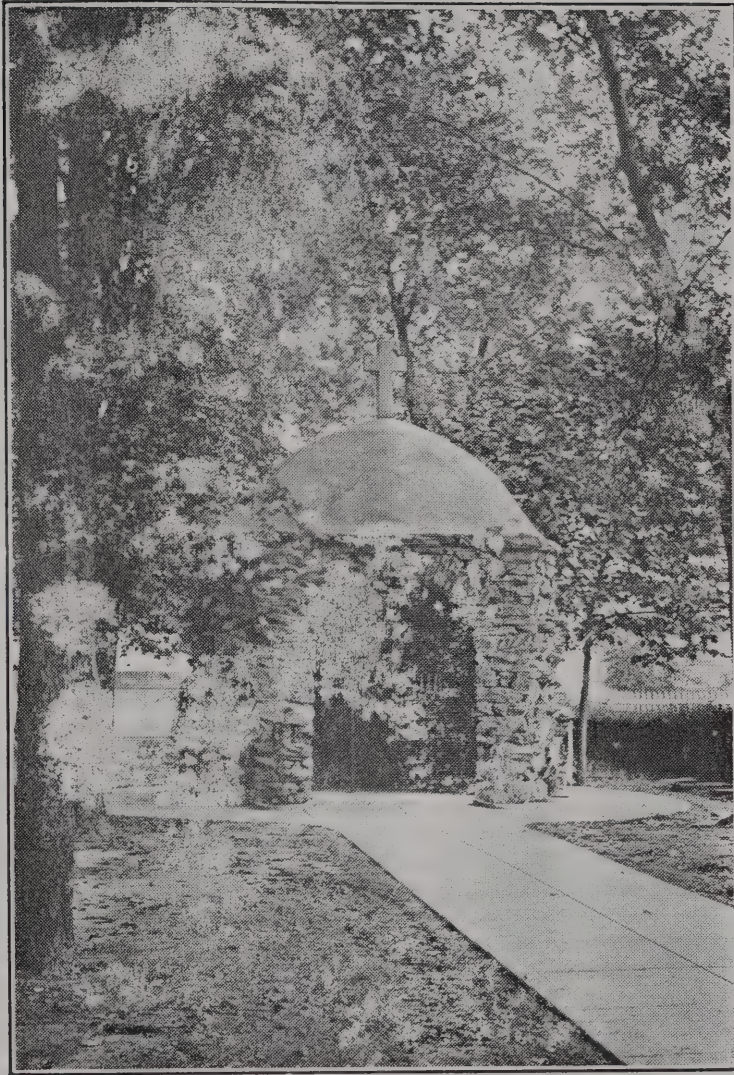
Pennsylvania" (page 245) that the cost per capita per week in our orphanage was only \$1.19, the lowest average of all the Homes in the State of Pennsylvania, except two nurseries.

In 1915, the members of the Board could breathe easier when Mrs. C. Cabale bequeathed to St. Vincent's \$12,000. It was the second large bequest in the history of the Home. The entire sum was at once handed to the House-Committee in order to proceed with the long desired improvements. The corresponding fire tower on the northern wing of the centre building was erected. The stairways that had led up from the inside of the building were taken out, and in the space thus gained, new lavatories and toilet rooms for the girls were installed, which in return made an improved drainage system imperative. In the school building the old stairway was also taken out and replaced in such a manner that the addition of toilet rooms was possible. Free installation of electricity in the centre building had been refused in 1890 as "too dangerous." But meanwhile greater security had been achieved and the old gas burners were now, 25 years later, replaced by electric lights.

The greatest improvements were made in the chapel, the renovation of which had been taken over by the Ladies' Aid as its gift to the Golden Jubilee of Sister Superior Frederica. The contract for painting was given to Mr. Frei who had also done the work in 1901. New stained glass windows, stations of the cross and altars were ordered. The altars were made in St. Francis Industrial School, Eddington, the money for the side altars being donated by Mr. Aloysius Mueller, superintendent of the Home. Mrs. Erdrich of Bridesburg presented the stations of the cross. In 1910, Father Michel had acquired new pews for the chapel through the kindness of Monsignor Kiernan, Pastor of St. Patrick's Church. These had been repainted. Thus the entire chapel was beautifully changed. According to the House Chronicle the new electric lighting system made the church "radiant with heavenly splendor." We readily understand the happiness of the sisters and orphans when the doors of the renovated chapel were opened for service.

LOURDES GROTTO

In order to increase devotion another place of worship had previously been erected, a grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. A member of the Ladies' Aid donated it. On August 15, 1912, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the solemn dedication took place. Circular in form, the grotto is twelve feet high and nine feet wide. A statue of the Immaculate Conception occupies the centre of the interior and before her a second statue represents Blessed Bernadette in a kneeling position, her eyes fixed on the heavenly apparition. The entrance is closed by an iron gate before which two kneeling chairs are placed. Rev. M. G. Will, C. SS. R., now president of the Orphan Asylum, dedicated the grotto and in a touching sermon spoke of the miracles of Lourdes and of the future blessing this shrine would bring to the Home. Indeed, this grotto has continued to be a place of



LOURDES GROTTO

blessing to this day, being the final exterior monument of a devotion long in existence. It is a spot where visitors delight to pray. During the month of May the children daily assemble there before school hours for a short devotion. The beauty of the shrine has been enhanced considerably by the addition of a path leading up to it, ornamented on both sides by trees, shrubbery and flowers.

The manifold and necessary improvements of 1915 used up the whole sum of Celeste Cabale's bequest; therefore, in 1917, there was

again a shortage of money. Only in the following year the great wave of prosperity made itself felt in the Orphan Asylum, riding on the crest of the large gift of \$15,000 from the Borgmann will. It opened a period of material progress such as St. Vincent's had never known in its entire history.

From 1900 to 1920 the expenditures by the Board of Managers amounted to \$463,634.00. Despite this great amount of money it is characteristic of this period that sufficient money was never available. The necessity of a sufficient trust fund was quite apparent when Diocesan support ceased, Orphan Festivals were no longer held, and the old methods of raising money were less productive. Since the expenses increased the difficulties would have been great indeed had it not been for two large bequests. "But God harkened to the prayers of the orphans," writes the secretary in the 57th Annual Report. He always does.

Of the new means tried only one gave proof of lasting value, The Ladies Aid Society. Donation-Day also became more productive when, beginning in 1915, all German parishes contributed a special envelope collection.

RECREATION PAVILION

On August 19, 1919, the new pavilion for the girls was opened. It took the place of the old "shed," a large wooden platform about one foot from the ground, covered by a roof. One side had been used by the girls, the other by the boys. Many were the festivities this old shed had witnessed. The yearly picnics of parish societies had taken place in it and often the songs of choirs had been heard there. Now the shed was converted into a pavilion of modern construction 33 by 63 feet. The floor is of cement; the roof is supported by sixteen columns about 10 feet high. In the middle is a sand pit for the little ones. The cost was about \$2,000. Father Bader, C.S.S.R., President of the Board, donated two merry-go-rounds. Mr. Frederick of Tacony, gave the swings and see-saws. The same year brought the electric wiring of the boys' building, at an expense of \$4,400 which was paid for by the Ladies' Aid. The outside of the old centre building was changed completely when in 1920 its red bricks were covered by a layer of white cement. The cost was \$9,000.



George Schmidt

STATE SUPPORT

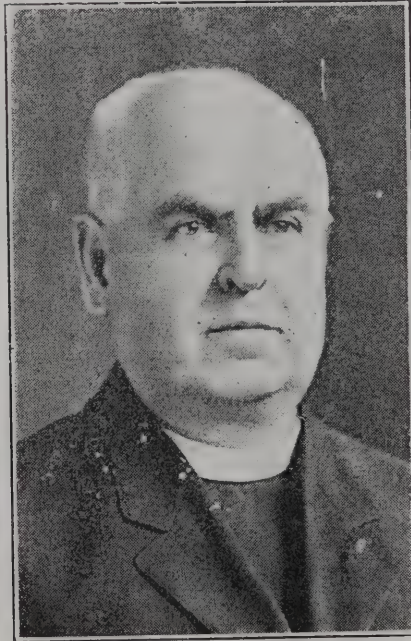
Among the prominent members of the Board at this period, George Schmidt takes high rank. He was born in 1849, in Germany and, when still quite young, came to the United States. His hard work and perseverance enabled him in 1877 to open a furniture and carpet store at Passyunk, Christian and Sixth Streets. He was highly honored not only in his own parish, St. Alphonsus, but also by the German and American circles of South Philadelphia. He was treasurer of the Augustine Social and Beneficial Ass'n twenty-nine years, contributing much to its great success. He was president of the South Philadelphia Schuetzenverein, the South Philadelphia Land Company, the Wharton Building Association and for many years Director of the Fourth Dickerson Building Association. For four terms he served in the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia, was elected in 1908, as a member of the State Legislature and was reelected for this office in 1910. His special love and care were given to St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum. For more than twenty years, 1891-1912, he was a member of its Board of Managers. He spared neither time nor labor when he worked for the welfare of this institution. At the yearly orphan festivals he was always chairman of the festival committee and welcomed as such the societies who attended. He died January 26, 1912, at the age of sixty-two.

While a member of the legislature in the House of Representatives, he was instrumental in procuring state support for the asylum. He interested Senator John T. Murphy in having the name of St. Vincent's added to the list of charitable institutions to which appropriations were made. Our Home was allotted a share that ranged from \$1,500.00 to \$2,000.00 yearly; however, in 1921, this support was withdrawn. A man named Willis Collins filed a Bill in Equity in Dauphin County against the State treasurer and against a great num-

ber of Institutions, including St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum of Tacony, to restrain the State from making appropriations to "sectarian" institutions. This case was decided by the court in Dauphin County in favor of the institutions, and was then appealed to the Supreme Court, which reversed the decision of the lower court. The total amount of financial aid granted to St. Vincent's in these fourteen years was \$24,375.00.

FAITHFUL LABORERS

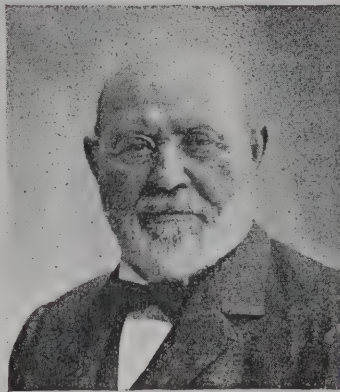
St. Vincent's Orphanage is the noble achievement of united German Catholic efforts. Usually only the best are willing to sacrifice themselves in such undertakings, hence St. Vincent's experienced the co-operation and the influence of practically every great Catholic priest and layman of German descent living in Philadelphia.



Rev. Henry Stommel

Among the priests of this period the most outstanding is Father Stommel "the Churchbuilder." He takes his place with the two great Missionary priests of the Diocese, namely, The Venerable Bishop Neumann and Monsignor Heinen, the Apostle of the Slavs. Father Stommel gave to the Philadelphia Diocese all the noble impulses and ideals of a saintly life. Born June 23, 1842, in the little town of Ruperichterth, in the Archdiocese of Cologne, Germany, he prepared for priesthood at the University of Louvain, Belgium and was ordained September 11, 1870. Bishop Wood accepted him in the

Diocese of Philadelphia, and from 1871 to 1890, Father Stommel built not less than eight churches. On October 1, 1890, he was made pastor of St. Alphonsus Church where he built a parochial school. During the twenty-seven years that he was pastor, Father Stommel was one of the Vice-Presidents of the Board of Managers at whose meetings he was a regular attendant, often presiding at same. In 1893, he was appointed a member of the building committee for the erection of a new school. His death on December 30, 1917, closed a life of unusual achievement in the service of God.



John Kieffer

Kieffer Family

Among the laity such names stand out as Drexel, Drueding, Voell, Erdrich, and Obert. It is a noteworthy fact that the love for the orphanage has become a tradition in many families. The longest record for active work in the history of St. Vincent's belongs to the Kieffer family. Mr. John Kieffer was a member of the Board of Managers for 42 years, until his death in 1914. His son John F. Kieffer followed him in the same office from 1915 until his death in 1925. Mrs. John F. Kieffer was the foundress of the Ladies' Aid and its president from 1903 until her death in 1932.

Another distinguished family was that of Mr. Christopher Fluehr. He was a member of the Board from 1886 until 1890. His son John followed him from 1904 until his death in 1932. The latter delighted in providing entertainment for the orphans.



William Krause

Two chairmen of the House Committee, William Krause and John Ostertag, deserve mention for their extraordinary zeal. William Krause was born May 17, 1852, in Vechta, Kreis Oldenburg, Prussia, and came to the United States in 1868. After staying in New York for two years he came to Philadelphia with his father where he became a well known mason contractor. It is claimed that he is the originator of the cement side walk, and in many parts of the city one can still find the name of his firm on old side walks. For 55 years he was a faithful member of St. Peter's church. He was President of the trustees of this parish and President of the Holy Family Society. When the new St. Peter's Church was built in 1901 he was chairman of the building committee. In 1892, Mr. Krause was elected to the Board of Managers as successor to Mr. Franz Heidel. Through his strong character and active interest, he was soon one of the best known members of the Board. He did all the cement work for the Orphanage and secretly presented many gifts to the same. He died, March 17, 1925.



John Ostertag

John Ostertag the faithful coworker of William Krause was born July 26, 1857, in Moegglingen, Wuerttemberg, and emigrated while very young to Philadelphia. Here he successfully conducted a restaurant at 2207 North Second Street until 1910 when he retired from business.

Under his conservative direction the Hancock Building Association became one of the leading organizations of the city. He was also treasurer of the Northeastern Building Association until his death.

For almost forty years, 1890-1929, he was a member of the Board of Managers and for more than a decade was chairman of the House Committee. Someone called him the greatest chairman St. Vincent's had in fifty years. He would visit the Home four and five times each week and no work was too hard, no inconvenience too great where the orphanage was concerned. Its progress was his main interest. As a man of deep piety he regarded this work from a supernatural view point and never sought any personal reward. Therefore, he was not only highly esteemed but deeply loved by everyone. The Asylum suffered a great loss when he was called to his eternal reward on January 24, 1929. His son John succeeded him as a member of the Board.



FIFE AND DRUM CORPS — (1922)

CHAPTER II.

THE HOME UNDER SISTER M. FREDERICA BRENNEIS 1896-1920



ON October 1, 1896, Sister Mary Frederica Brenneis arrived to succeed Sr. M. Regina Bilz, who for the past 33 years had been a faithful mother to the orphans, but now her 64 years began to tell on her; she left the orphanage that same day accompanied by Sister Virgilia Stratmann, her co-worker during this time. Father Speidel, Rector of St. Peter's, had the sisters and children of the Home assemble in the hall and in the presence of the entire Board of Managers thanked the departing sisters for the great work they had done and presented each sister with a silk umbrella as a souvenir.

The new superior, Sister M. Frederica, was born September 18, 1844, in Karlsruhe, Baden. While still a child her parents emigrated to Baltimore, where in 1859, she entered the Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and made her profession August 28, 1865. Her first seven years as a sister were spent in Holy Trinity School, Philadelphia. Until her appointment to St. Vincent's she was active successively in Washington, D. C.; Fort Lee, N. J.; New York City and again in Holy Trinity.

In appearance she differed strikingly from Sister Regina, who was large and strong, one of those hard working German sisters who labored so zealously in the early days of hardships and privations. Sister Frederica was small of stature, almost frail, but in that little frame was hidden a very active soul, an iron will, a clear mind trained by a thorough education. The interior life of the Home changed completely under her direction.

At the time of her arrival the greatest difficulty was the overcrowded condition of the institution. Repeatedly since 1897 she urged the Board to erect another large building to relieve this congestion, and in 1901 she finally saw her wish realized. The radical change this new structure effected in the life of the Home has already been described in a previous chapter. Another change was the adoption of modern principles and improvements in conducting the Home. Gas stoves, electric light, and good plumbing found their way into the Home. Clothes were bought ready made eliminating home tailoring, and, since 1906, bread has no longer been baked in the Asylum, but purchased outside. Sister Frederica gladly took advantage of the improvements of our mechanical age to lighten the labors of the sisters.

PHYSICAL CARE

These and many other changes created a new St. Vincent's under Sr. Frederica. One of her first improvements was to replace the queer looking green cots and their hard straw mattresses with modern

iron bedsteads and mattresses. It was fortunate for Sr. Frederica that at the time of her arrival an excellent physician, Dr. Elmer Kaiser had been engaged for the Home. From 1896 to August 31, 1925, he took splendid care of the Asylum and it is a tribute to him that little sickness was found in the Home during this period. With the granting of State support in 1908, supervision through the Board of Health became more strict. It insisted on sufficient room for each child in the bedrooms, and for this reason few children were admitted in 1910 and 1911 through "lack of room" despite the fact that the number of children had been decreased and more buildings erected. In 1916, Dr. Kaiser's report showed the health of the children to be excellent and that in seven years he did not have to lament the death of a single child. During the other eight years of his activity there were no deaths nor any serious epidemics, and he attributed this to the excellent nourishment and careful nursing of the sisters. In 1911, Dr. Kaiser introduced the "schic test" when for a short time a serious measles and whooping cough epidemic threatened the Home. He was ably supported by the nurses Sister Anthony Bauer (1903-1914) and then by Sr. Michaela Mueller, who had been the experienced needle work teacher of the Home since 1899. There are very few children who have not experienced her kind care in the last 18 years. When Dr. Kaiser was called away for military service in 1917-1918, his place was taken by Dr. George Enoch who had to contend with one of the most serious epidemics that ever visited the Home, namely, the "flu" of 1918. In its simplicity the House Chronicle gives us a very gripping description of the course the epidemic took in St. Vincent's.

THE SPANISH INFLUENZA

"On October 5th and 6th, 1918 several children succumbed to influenza. By October 12th the malady had stricken 78 other children, and Sister Michaela who nursed the girls and Sister Eugenia who cared for the boys also fell victims to the disease. All the sisters took turns in nursing. We couldn't get a doctor because they were overburdened with work. Dr. Enoch himself, our house doctor, was seriously ill through overexertion. In this serious situation Sister Frederica called upon Rev. Father Bader, President of the Institution, and he promised to provide a doctor. On October 12, Dr. Grady arrived and examined every one of our patients. He said the children had been nursed very well even without a doctor and hoped that soon all would be well again, though he found Sister Michaela's case very critical. Sister Eusebia had also been taken ill. During this time we had daily exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 2 to 6 P. M. for the elimination of the epidemic."

"In the city hundreds of people daily fell prey to this disease. On October 12th four sisters of St. Peter's came to help us in nursing the sick. During this week the number of our patients increased to 120. Sister Justa who had faithfully helped, also became a victim of the 'flu', so did Sister Polycarp and Sister Petronia. Dr. Grady himself having contracted the disease and fearing one of our patients Anna Kaiser was about to suffocate we called on Dr. Witzel, who came at once and did all he could to save her. On October 19th Anna, fully conscious received the last Sacraments and died at 2.15 P. M., the priest (Father Scherf), the doctor, her mother, her aunt, and several sisters being at her side.

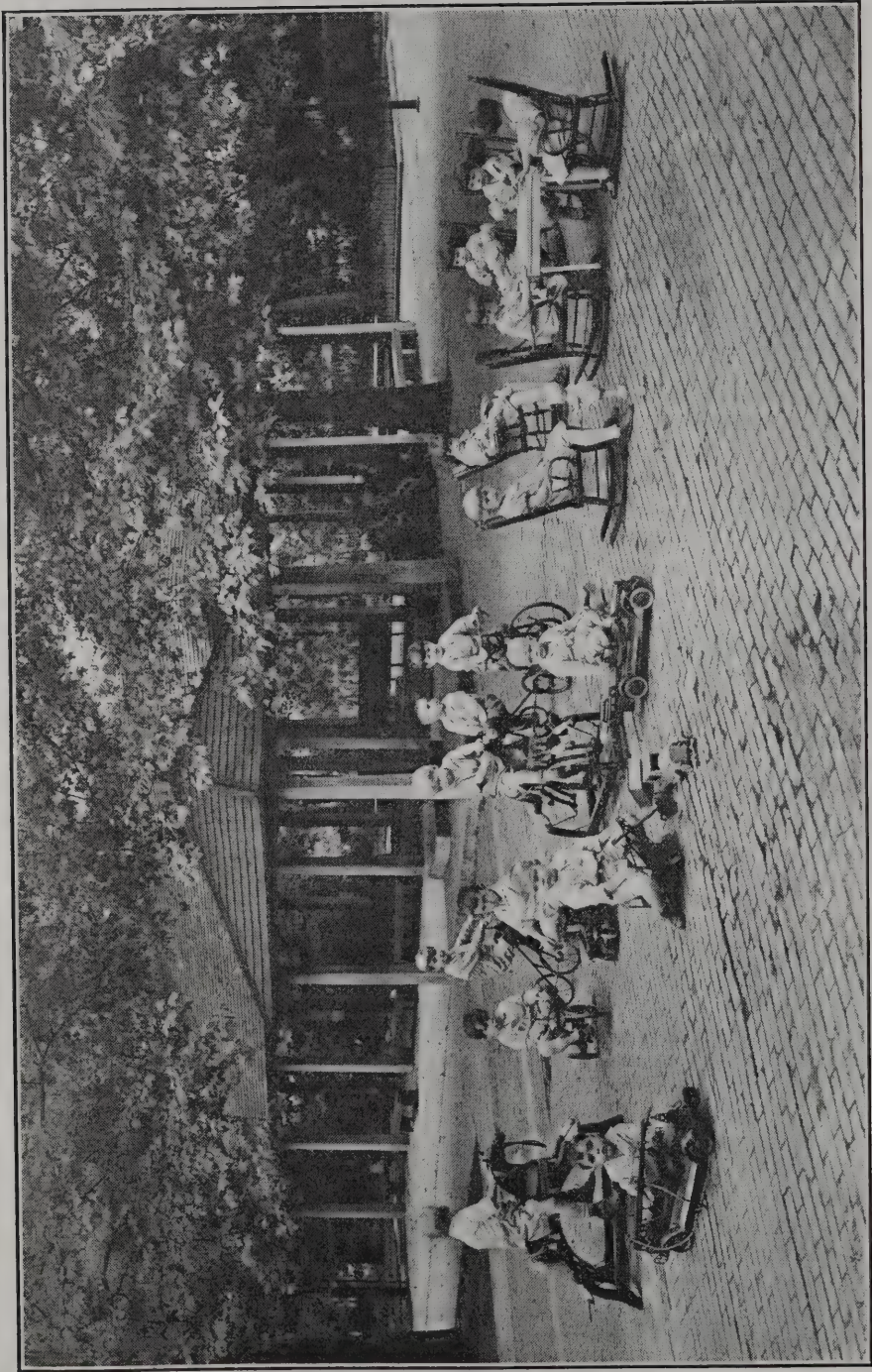
She had double pneumonia. During the nights of October 18 — 19, eleven of our babies became very ill, some of them developing a very high fever. Sisters Michaela and Eugenia are well again. "Thanks be to God". On October 20, the number of little ones sick of influenza had increased to twenty-eight. On this day the Provincial Mother Agnes honored us with a short visit to express her sympathy, and offered to send us help from Baltimore.

"More than half of the 164 children are up again but they are not permitted to mingle with the healthy ones. On October 21st Dr. Grady had recovered and paid us a visit, and was surprised that we had lost but one child out of so many cases, he asked to see the nurses of the children and paid them the highest praise. Towards the end of October, everyone of the 164 children and six sisters who had been ill were again out of bed and on the way to complete recovery. Only Charles Schmuelling and Albert Hoffman were still in a serious condition. Charles hovered at the point of death for several days, and since we could not procure his baptismal certificate, Father Scherf baptized him conditionally on October 29th. He died October 31st of pneumonia. The latter had already caused the death of thousands of people, usually filling the lungs of the patient with either blood or water, thus impeding the action of the heart. Charles was five years old, and on November 4th he was buried in our cemetery. Little Albert, only four years old, was taken to St. Mary's Hospital, where he died on September 2nd."

After these sad events, the epidemic disappeared from St. Vincent's. Considering the great mortality in Philadelphia, the Home was fortunate in having but three deaths out of 164 cases. The authorities expressed the highest commendation of the splendid work of the sisters during this critical time. Although there will never be sufficient means to counteract epidemics similar to the one of 1918, nevertheless it again emphasized the necessity of a quarantine as advocated by Dr. Kaiser during his term. The Board recognized its importance and mentioned it almost regularly in its yearly reports; yet it never found sufficient means to realize this plan.

HOUSE RULES

Another change worthy of note under Sr. Frederica's administration is found in the policies guiding the relation between the child's parental home and the orphanage. In the beginning, visitors were admitted twice weekly, on Sunday and Thursday. Thus the parents had many opportunities of seeing their children. In 1897, Thursday was dropped as a visiting day, because "school is being disturbed too much by visits on week days." In 1903, the Board was asked to keep one Sunday a month free for the sisters, but this was refused. Rather more surprising, therefore, is a change of rules in 1904, which left only the 4th Sunday of each month a visiting day. In 1911, all ecclesiastical and secular feast days were added. Under Sister Regina, visitors were never permitted to enter the back yard, but had to remain in front of the house where tables and benches had been provided for their comfort. In the evening these were removed. This restriction was abolished under Sister Frederica's management. The time allotted for visits was from 2 to 5 P. M.



CHILDREN AT PLAY

In years past, children had also been permitted to spend a part of their vacation with parents or relatives. Thus the House Chronicle writes in 1871, "On July 28, vacation time began. Boarders and several orphans received permission from the President of the Orphans Board to spend this time with their parents or relatives." However, in 1896, it was decided "that in the future no child may spend the Christmas vacation with relatives since so many boys are running away." And in 1911, the Board agreed on motion, "that the rule giving the children permission to leave the Home for a few days be repealed" and substituted, "that only in case of sickness and death, permission shall be given and then only in company with a sister or an older child and for but one day." This rule is still in force.*

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Sister Frederica is described as a very pious woman. For hours she would pray before the Blessed Sacrament. No wonder that an excellent spirit prevailed in the Home. The most eloquent testimony in this respect are the many vocations to the priesthood and sisterhood. Besides the chaplain of the Institution and Sister Frederica, two sisters were especially zealous in promoting vocations. They were Sister Seraphia Bukofsky, who cared for the boys from 1900-1914, and Sister Casimira Werr, her successor from 1914-1920. Ten boys were ordained to the priesthood in Sister Frederica's time. The first Mass of the newly ordained priests was always celebrated in the orphanage with the greatest splendor. This in turn awoke new vocations. A list of the names of priests and sisters as far as it could be ascertained is to be found in a special appendix. Besides the above there were many others who strove for the same goal but without success. But even their attempt gives splendid testimony to their good Catholic education.

Sister Frederica also enjoyed the advantage of very zealous priests who took care of St. Vincent's Parish during her time. Father Assmann, 1899-1901, for many years Diocesan Director of the Association of the Holy Childhood, deeply imbued the Home with a love for mission work. The children made many sacrifices to save money for heathen babies. Many hundreds of them were bought with money given by St. Vincent's orphans. Father Assmann and Father Michel made the reception into this Association very solemn. It was held in conjunction with the annual blessing of the little ones on the feast day of the Holy Innocents. This society is still in a very flourishing condition.

Up to 1900 the older orphans, both boys and girls, belonged to the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In that year Father Abt separated them, organizing the boys into an Aloysius Society, and admitting only girls into the Sodality. Membership in these societies made the orphans active participants in parish life. When the parish was transferred from St. Vincent's in 1924, these two societies ceased to exist. The moral support given by these societies to religious edu-

*The first house rules were made in 1864, but the first copy of them bears the date 1899.

cation of the children, and the abundance of grace gained by frequent Holy Communion helped to foster the splendid spirit which prevailed in St. Vincent's during Sister Frederica's time.

FEASTDAYS

Feastdays were relatively few in the first days of our Home. Since 1900 the number of friends who provided happy holidays for the children have increased. From 1900-1911 the gentlemen of the Keystone Yacht Club gave a show and party during the New Year's season. Since 1905, the orphans have shown their gratitude by giving a yearly entertainment to the members of this club and their families. In 1902, the House Chronicle for the first time mentions that the Ladies of the Sacred Heart invited about one hundred orphans to their beautiful academy in Eden Hall near Torresdale, Pa. The young madames educated there each took one of the orphan girls as a special friend and companion for the day. Plays on the grounds, special entertainments, and presents have made this a yearly gala day for the last thirty years. In 1907, the Knights of Columbus started a great charitable program. In June of each year they treat all the Catholic orphans of the city to an outing at one of the pleasure parks of the city (Willow Grove or Woodside Park). Good meals, a comprehensive program of fun and sports with fine prizes for the winners make this day the one most eagerly looked forward to in the whole year. On Thanksgiving Day, the Knights also serve a big turkey dinner and present a lively entertainment afterwards.

Since 1875, the children had given a yearly entertainment to the members of the Board on New Year's Day. Since 1881 it had been repeated for the relatives and friends of the children and also for the members of the parish. Sister Frederica continued this policy. In 1901 the number of spectators was so great that more than 200 people had to be turned away, as the hall was filled to its capacity — 600 people, therefore the program was repeated on the two following Sundays.

This program was as follows—

1. Song, Welcome
2. New Year's Greeting
3. Christmas Carol.
4. Das Schwaebische Waldweiblein
(The Little Woman of the Swabian Woods)
5. The Babies' Motion Song
6. Der Verdaechtliche Kuchen—(The Suspicious Cake)
Two Act Comedy
7. We are Happy Little Girls
8. The Professor at Home (A comedy quartette)
9. Wir Sind Deutche Maedchen
(We are German Girls)
10. The Little Soldiers
11. Sleighbell Drill
12. The German Fifth.
(Nord-Amerika, January 18, 1901.)

These plays continued until 1912. During the course of the year the children also presented plays on the feastdays of the chaplain and the Sister Superior.

The foregoing sketch gives us an idea of the character and activity of Sister Frederica. She was appointed Superior when a new era was knocking at the doors of St. Vincent's. Through a wise use of the advantages offered, she brought St. Vincent's to a high standard of efficiency. That her merits were appreciated, was made clear at the time of her Golden Jubilee of Profession in 1915. Her many friends vied with one another to do her honor. The Ladies' Aid had the chapel redecorated, the Board presented her with a valuable gift. Of her former boys, five were at the altar for the Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving. Rev. Edward Desmond was celebrant, assisted by the Revs. Joseph Hermle and Albert Neidert. Father Felician Wachendorfer, C.P.P.S., was master of ceremonies, and Father Drabinsky, O.S.A., was in the Sanctuary. How highly she was esteemed by the members of her own community, was shown by the presence of 100 Sisters of Notre Dame. A special surprise was the arrival of Rev. Mother Agnes accompanied by 12 Sisters, who were destined to be the pioneers of the new mission field in Porto Rico.

Due to the new Canon Law of 1918, Superiors may hold office for only six years, hence Sister Frederica, though still in the best of physical and mental strength was obliged, in September, 1920, to relinquish the work so dear to her heart.

Her successor, Sister M. Hedwig Raab, remained only three months. Sister Frederica, who by petition of the Board had been permitted to stay in the Home, took charge once more till August 16, 1921, when she left for the Motherhouse at Baltimore, where she died a year later on October 26th. She is buried in the Convent Cemetery at Notch Cliff, Md.



MOST REVEREND DANIEL J. GERCKE, D. D.,
Bishop of Tucson, Arizona

BISHOP'S RESIDENCE

192 S. Stone Avenue

Tucson, Arizona

March 21, 1933.

Rev. Francis X. Roth, O. S. A.,
St. Rita's Monastery,
Racine, Wis.,
Dear Father:-

I am delighted to learn that you are going to write the history of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum of Tacony, Philadelphia, on the occasion of its seventy fifth anniversary. The happiest memories of my life are those in which I live again the days when reason was just beginning to dawn. Our family lived then within the shadow of dear old St. Vincent's. There was no other parish in Tacony and good Catholic mothers, like my own, availed themselves of the opportunity of sending their children to St. Vincent's, where, under the guiding hand of dear, devoted Sisters of Notre Dame they learned the purpose for which they were placed in this world. They were taught Catholic philosophy, to know, to love and to serve God in this life in order to be happy with Him forever in the next.

I attended the School, which was open for day scholars as well as for the children of the institution, for about three years, prior to the year 1884. After attending the public school in Tacony I went to St. Joseph's College in the year 1889; to St. Charles Seminary at Overbrook, Pa., in September 1891, where I was ordained to the priesthood on June 1, 1901. It was on Election day, when Cleveland defeated Blain for the presidency in November 1884 that I severed my connection with St. Vincent's school. Much water has gone under the bridge since that memorable day in my life. I have traveled in many places and have had a varied experience of what one would call life.

Wherever I have been I have never been unmindful of the deep debt that I owe to St. Vincent's and the dear sisters who made many sacrifices that we their children might live for God and things eternal. I go back to Tacony about once a year on the occasion of the bishops' annual meeting in Washington. I meet some of the people, who were boys and girls with me at the old place "across the railroad". They have kept the Faith. They are passing it on to their children. Much, if not all of this, is due to early days at St. Vincent's.

Fondest memories cluster about dear Father Freude, the first priest whom I ever met. Sister Vincent, who was my first teacher and Sister Virgilia who taught in the upper classes. Later on as a student I was at St. Vincent's to see Father Freude off, when he returned to Germany, where he lived the few remaining days of a holy life spent for God and souls. While I was a priest at Holy Trinity parish in Philadelphia I had the happiness of meeting Sister Virgilia and, since I became a bishop, I saw Sister Vincent who, after many years, was stationed in her old home. Naturally, in the memento at holy mass and in my prayers pro omnibus benefactoribus my heart goes up to God to thank Him for the graces, which I have received, and to beg His benediction on all those who have gone before, during the past seventy five years as well as upon those who are still continuing His work among the little ones at St. Vincent's, Tacony.


Bishop of Tucson.



BOYS' RECREATION ROOM

CHAPTER III.
ST. VINCENT'S AS PARISH
1900-1924

Rev. Joseph Assmann, 1899-1900

IN strong contrast to the long pastorate of Father Freude, are the frequent changes of the next few years. His immediate successor was the congenial and jovial Father Joseph Assmann. He was appointed in June, 1899, and stayed until March, 1900. From that time we have a better insight into parochial life as revealed in the Announcement books which still exist.

Upon his arrival Father Assmann found three societies—the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for the young people of the parish, the Rosary Society for the married women, and St. Joseph's Society for men. Father Assmann introduced Christian Doctrine on Sunday afternoons. It was compulsory for all children under 16 years of age to attend. At the beginning of the new century, the Holy Father desired that the Apostolate of Prayer be introduced in all parishes. Father Assmann complied with this wish at once. He also established the Association of the Holy Childhood for the little ones. For many years he had been Diocesan Director of this association. Father Assmann also began collecting for new Stations of the Cross. Before sufficient funds were obtained, he was called to St. Joseph's Church in Mauch Chunk, Pa., where he died in 1930.

Rev. Charles Abt, 1900-1902

Father Assmann was followed by Father Charles Abt from March, 1900, until November, 1902, whose term of office was of the greatest importance in the development of the parish. He undertook the difficult task of training the members of his congregation to an active, self-sustaining parish life. Not a single religious activity of St. Vincent's was conducted without his inspiration and support.

As a first contribution to St. Vincent's parish life, he organized the Aloysius Society for boys. Then he insisted on strict order and better participation in the meetings of the various societies. He invited other priests to enhance the solemnity at the reception into the Sodality. He introduced bi-monthly Communion for the St. Joseph's Society. The Rosary Society was given a vast amount of work to do for the sacristy. With the help of the parish he had the chapel repainted in 1900. He took great pains to make the church services as attractive as possible, describing all arrangements to the least detail in his announcement book. Under his auspices Father Kappes, once an inmate of St. Vincent's Orphanage, celebrated his first Mass. Father Abt also invited other German priests to say their first Masses in his church and was happy when four newly-ordained accepted his invitation in one year, 1901.

Father Abt knew that one of the principal means to promote parish life has always been the insistence on better collections, and for this reason he began to take up the monthly collections in person, started little entertainments, for which he personally sold tickets going from house to house. He also introduced the five cent house collection, because "otherwise his salary would be less than that of a poor vicar."

After two years of untiring and energetic labor, Father Abt was transferred to Allentown, Pa., on November 14, 1902, and the House Chronicle has this to say of his leaving. "In him the congregation lost a zealous priest and the orphans a true friend." At present he is laboring in the Diocese of Erie.

Rev. Anthony M. Koos, 1902-1904

Father Abt was succeeded by Rev. Anthony Koos, who also remained but two years. Of a quiet character, he followed the footsteps of his predecessor. To encourage his house collectors, he began to say a Mass for them every week. In 1904, he was called to Haycock, Pa., and is now chaplain of St. Joseph's Hospital, Reading, Pa.

Rev. George Michel, 1904-1918

In November, 1904, Father George Michel was appointed to St. Vincent's and was destined to remain there until February, 1918. He was born and educated in Holy Trinity Parish, Philadelphia, where his father as well as his brother had been members of the Board of Managers for many years. Father Michel was no stranger to the place. He had loved it from his earliest youth when he had visited it regularly with his father and shared in all its celebrations. A year before his appointment he had given two beautiful statues to the Home and had blessed them personally.

Being intimately acquainted with existing conditions, Father Michel determined to give his congregation a church of its own. He immediately began collecting a fund for the new building, and when leaving, he had gathered \$20,000 and had paid \$10,143 for the present property of one and one-half acres on Torresdale and Cottman Streets. He secured the money through church collections, regular house parties, and several major affairs during the course of the year. The church collections were never very large, since the people were few and poor. The regular Sunday collections, as a rule, amounted to approximately \$20, while the house parties brought about \$75 each. The first great picnic of the parish was held on the grounds of the Tacony Singing Society, on May 25, 1905.

Father Michel was very much interested in education, and was well known for his exceptional ability as a teacher. On his arrival the school contained five grades, with an enrollment of about 300 pupils; with the necessary permission he altered the school building so as to accommodate eight grades. The expenses entailed were met by the parish.

Services and religious instructions were entirely German. No English hymn was permitted, all sermons were in German, and all children had to study the catechism in German.

On May 21, 1916, Father Michel celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination, and on this occasion, Mr. Lang presented him with a purse of \$600 in the name of the parishioners, which Father Michel turned over to the building fund of the new church, but before he could begin this task, by the special wish of his Bishop, he accepted the pastorate of St. Alphonsus' parish in February, 1918, succeeding the venerated Father Stommel. Two years later he was given charge of St. Ludwig's parish, where he is still zealously laboring.

The number of Italian immigrants in Tacony grew rapidly after 1903. Especially during the time of the world war, 1914-1918, great numbers left the coal regions of Pennsylvania for the city in quest of better employment. This Italian group, the third Catholic group in Tacony, located chiefly between Torresdale Avenue and State Road. Its children were baptized and educated almost exclusively in the Orphan Asylum.

In 1912 they received their own spiritual father in the person of the Rev. Cosmas Bruni, who had come from Italy. Fr. Bruni built a church in Frankford for the Italians of the Northeast section. He likewise attempted to gather his countrymen of Tacony in St. Vincent's Chapel for religious instruction. In 1916 Fr. Alfred Procopio was appointed to build Our Lady of Consolation Church for them in Tacony. He erected a basement church over the "Duckpond" at St. Vincent and Tulip Streets. Twelve years later his successor, Fr. Angelo Angelini built a beautiful combination building at Princeton and Tulip Streets.

Rev. Joseph Plappert, 1918

Father Michel, who had been transferred to St. Alphonsus on February 7, 1918, was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Plappert. He arrived in the evening of the same day from Slatington, Pa. Being very sick and almost blind, it was only with a great effort that he could provide for the spiritual needs of St. Vincent's. He died on March 13. After the solemn funeral services at St. Vincent's, his body was transferred to St. Clair, Pa., where it rests in St. Boniface's parish cemetery.

Rev. Anthony Fasig, 1918

Father Plappert's successor was Fr. Anthony Scott Fasig, who arrived on April 10, 1918. Due to a vehement attack of malaria fever, the curse of St. Vincent's in years past, he asked to be changed and was appointed pastor of Quakertown in September, 1918. Today he is pastor of Holy Ghost Church, Bethlehem, Pa.

Rev. Aloysius Scherf, 1918-1921

On October 1, late at night, Father Aloysius Scherf arrived at the Home. He had been in a motor accident. Therefore, all plans for his reception were called off. Some time elapsed before he became acquainted with his parishioners. It will be recalled that the "flu" then raging held the city in a deadly grip. Thousands died; in the Orphan

Asylum 160 children were stricken. Since attendance at Mass might tend to spread the flu, all meetings were forbidden by the health authorities. Therefore, no services, not even on Sunday, were permitted for several weeks. The efforts of Father Scherf were very fruitful. In November, 1919, he had two Redemptorist Fathers, John Englert and Charles Browe, give a mission in German and English. Through the kindness of Mr. Herrman Buchborn a new organ was installed. It was especially built to meet the requirements of the chapel, and cost \$1800. It was played for the first time on September 26, 1920. This event was celebrated with a great musical concert. The choirs of St. Peter's and St. Vincent's rendered several selections. The children of the Home, under the direction of Sister M. Justa, music teacher for the Home, also participated. Father Parr, C. SS. R., an accomplished orator, gave a sermon on sacred music.*

Father Scherf continued the policy of Father Michel in financial matters. He held house parties and picnics and enjoyed the support of an excellent Dramatic Society. One play in the German Singing Hall netted \$600, although the little parish scarcely numbered seventy families. When Father Scherf left, the building fund had reached \$27,000.

On August 11, 1921, Father Scherf left St. Vincent's to take charge of the Most Blessed Sacrament parish in Bally, the oldest German Catholic parish in the State of Pennsylvania. However, he has not forgotten St. Vincent's and frequently visits the scene of his former labors.

Rev. Henry Kuss, 1921-1923

Rev. Henry Kuss, successor to Father Scherf, came from St. Alphonsus' Parish where he had been assistant. He arrived at a time when the depression of 1921 caused the unemployment of many of his parishioners and left when "prosperity" was rapidly approaching its zenith. His last collection, that for the Holy Father, amounted to \$106 and was the largest ever taken in St. Vincent's. It was also the time when the German Catholics of America with an admirable charity helped their starving brethren in Germany. Many collectors who came from across the sea also knocked at the door of St. Vincent's parish. Father Kneip, in 1921, received \$224. How great was the need of assistance became clear to everyone when Cardinal Faulhaber, the most renowned speaker of the German Episcopate, came personally to beg for help. When this eminent churchman passed through Tacony in a special car, the children of St. Vincent's assembled along the platform of the railroad station, cheering and waving American flags. The train slowed down and the Cardinal graciously acknowledged the children's greeting. In appreciation, he, in company with His Eminence, Cardinal Dougherty, paid a special visit to St. Vincent's on April 30, 1923, where he was tendered a solemn reception. In 1928, Bishop Schreiber, first Bishop of Berlin, was guest of the Home during his visit to this country.

*The old organ was given as a present to Father Scanlon, first pastor of St. Bartholomew's in Wissinoming, Philadelphia.

Following the war, Tacony rapidly developed into a fine suburb for the working classes. Rows of houses were erected in quick succession. New streets were built through the farm land of the past, changing Tacony almost over night. This brought with it a noticeable influx of Catholics from the older districts of the city. St. Matthew's (1925), St. Bernard's (1927), and St. Timothy's (1929) were built in quick succession. This change of conditions again caused the parishioners seriously to consider the erection of a new church. Money was available and the trend of the younger generation to occupy the new homes above Torresdale Avenue made the erection of a new church imperative; otherwise they would be lost to St. Vincent's. With this objective in view, Father Kuss worked energetically to raise the required funds. Card parties, bazaars and other entertainments followed in quick succession. But while in the midst of his preparations, he was called to the pastorate of Slatington, Pa.

Rev. John P. Ludwig, 1923-1924

St. Vincent's new pastor, Father John Ludwig, came from St. Joseph's Church, Mauch Chunk, Pa., where he had been assistant since 1912, and had taken special care of the Slavish population of that district. Fr. Ludwig is by birth an Austrian and speaks many of the dialects of that country. He arrived at St. Vincent's on June 8, 1923, determined to materialize the plans of Fr. Kuss and give the parish a new church. His first lawn party netted \$825. At a mass meeting he gained the enthusiastic support of his parish, and formed a finance committee, which in a few months collected over \$10,000. As early as 1924, work was begun on the new church of St. Hubert. On September 21, 1924, the corner stone was blessed by Bishop Gercke, a former pupil of St. Vincent's. The celebration opened with a parade formed by the Knights of St. George Cadets, the school children, Johnson's 103d Engineer's Band, and the various church societies. With the Bishop and Clergy in an auto the parade moved from Vincent and Milnor Streets to Torresdale Avenue and Cottman Street, where a platform had been erected for the celebrants and choir. Twenty-four priests were present. Bishop Gercke expressed his keen pleasure in taking part in this march of progress. The Rev. Wm. J. Casey, then delivered an inspiring sermon, and the hymn "Holy God We Praise Thy Name" brought the celebration to an impressive conclusion.

On December 21, 1924, the members of the parish attended services for the last time in St. Vincent's Chapel. Father Ludwig preached a very touching farewell sermon, and with tears in their eyes, many left the little chapel in which they had worshipped all their lives. On Christmas day, 1924, the first Mass was said in the new church. The dream of more than twenty years had come true.

School was not opened at once in the new parish, therefore the children of St. Hubert's were compelled to attend St. Vincent's until the end of the school year of 1926. The Franciscan Sisters of Glen Riddle are teaching in the new school having returned once more to the place which had been the scene of their earliest activities.

Off the main highway lies St. Vincent's today. Once it had been the scene of Catholic life in Tacony and the heart of its educational activities. This cradle of Catholicity should be like a shrine kept in high honor and loved by all Catholics in our suburb, especially by the members of St. Hubert's parish. How times have changed. Six Catholic churches and as many Catholic schools now take care of the spiritual needs of their members. Tacony meant in the language of the Indians, "uninhabited land." More than 2500 Catholic families alone now live in this "land without people." Verily even the history of little St. Vincent's is proof of the words of Our Redeemer — "The kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown up it is greater than all herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in the branches thereof."



Hermann Weweler

Mr. Hermann Weweler was born in 1833 in Westphalia, Germany and came to America in 1852. He was a faithful member of St. Alphonsus' parish and acted 28 years as representative of St. Alphonsus on the Board of Managers of the orphanage, seventeen of them as treasurer, until his death, which occurred on February 14, 1901. He was an ardent worker for the institution and served as chairman on many important committees. His son Joseph A. Weweler was elected treasurer in 1906.

CHAPTER IV.

PROSPERITY—DEPRESSION

THE years from 1924-1930 must be considered as a unit. Economically they are the years of an astonishing but artificial prosperity. Regarding St. Vincent's we find its first traces in the year 1919, but it is not until 1924 and during the following six years that we feel its full effects. Father John Behr, C.S.S.R., known and beloved for his kindness, was President of the Home during practically the entire period, from 1925-1929. His ability in obtaining the full and wholehearted co-operation of all those responsible for the welfare of the Home made him an ideal man for this position. The Board also was exceptionally fortunate in comprising among its members, men experienced in various branches of business. The Superior of the Home from August 29, 1924, to 1930, was Sister M. Zita Mauskopf. She was the originator of the greater number of improvements during these years. Tactful, energetic, and laboring incessantly for the welfare of the Home, she soon won the confidence of the Board which as a rule also gave her proposals practical consideration. This harmony of interests and efforts together with the exceedingly favorable economic conditions made possible the realization of many plans for the improvement of the Home.

EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

This began with a thorough renovation of all the buildings. The Ladies' Aid donated \$2400 to provide the two main buildings with screens. In 1925 these structures were connected through a covered iron bridge. A fire alarm system was likewise installed and the children given regular drill. The year 1927 saw the erection of a large two-story annex to the boys' building at a cost of \$21,269.62. This represents the most outstanding improvement since the erection of the building in 1902. The chief reason for the annex was to permit a separation of the older and younger boys in order to give them more specific attention. Previous to this time, all the boys were congested in a comparatively small room above the laundry, whereas the present recreation room for the older boys, on the second floor measures forty feet in length and thirty feet in width. It is large, bright, airy, and offers a beautiful view of the Delaware River. In 1930 it was equipped with individual chairs and tables with drawers for each boy.

On the first floor of the annex the floor space gained was joined with that between the laundry and the boys' building. It was then converted into a dining room for the sisters and a reception room for guests. To this date the latter had been entirely lacking. A large modern pantry with a mechanical cooling system was also added. The sisters dining room is 18 by 20 ft., the guest room 23 ft square and

the pantry is 14 by 34 ft. The most appreciated improvement was the providing of a basement containing about 1800 sq. ft. of floor space which was to house a modern and more efficient heating plant. Prior to its installation nine heaters had been required to furnish the necessary warmth for the various buildings. Now there are no heaters in any of the buildings occupied by the inmates of the Home. The new system was installed in 1928, and together with the necessary alterations in the various buildings and annex cost \$19,855.22.

The sisters' old refectory was converted into a bread pantry and equipped with a slicing machine. The kitchen was likewise modernized in every respect and fitted out with new ovens, boilers, pots, and separate coffee boilers. With its beautiful tile work, this kitchen is one of the most modern and practical in Philadelphia.

The other buildings also experienced the blessings of the times. The chapel was completely renovated. For the third time in thirty years this task was entrusted to the skill and efficiency of Mr. Frei. A new picture on each side of the main altar still further increased the beauty of the chapel. The one on the right depicts the Ascension of Christ, the one on the left the Assumption of His Blessed Mother. A new lighting system of an exceptionally artistic taste was also installed. Through the efforts of Sister Zita, generous friends likewise donated the statues of adoring angels on both sides of the main altar. A year previous to the renovation of the chapel the long desired



THE NEW KITCHEN

sacristy had been built between the two fire towers, its new closets are of cedar wood. The beautiful vestments and monstrance which they harbor were made by the firm of Fraeffel in Switzerland and acquired by Sister Zita. As a last remembrance, this superior in 1929, procured a Crib and a Holy Grave, both of which by their beauty, have always proven an attraction not only to the children but also to visitors.

The many improvements mentioned guaranteed better and more efficient care for the children and proved a considerable relief for the sisters, eliminating the heavier work.

Besides those already mentioned, other improvements were made which contributed much to raising the health standard of the children. For the girls a number of shower baths were installed in 1925, the same was done for the boys four years later. This permitted a quicker and more frequent bathing for the children than formerly when bath tubs were used. The Ladies' Aid Society had also modernized the boys' lavatory on the second floor.

With the opening of St. Hubert's school and the consequent withdrawal of many pupils from St. Vincent's, two extra classrooms were made available. In 1927 one of these was converted into a dental parlor, fully equipped and operated under the supervision of Dr. L. M. Goldschmidt. He was succeeded by Dr. Clayton in 1931. As a rule graduate students from Temple University give the necessary dental attention.

Another wish that had been repeatedly expressed in the past three decades was fulfilled in 1930. It was the opening of an infirmary. It is located on the third floor in the south wing of the centre building and occupies the rooms formerly reserved for the babies.

Finally the prosperity of the times afforded an opportunity of improving the lawn and playgrounds. Numerous trees and shrubs were planted, and flower beds laid out. The religious element was incorporated through the erection of statues of St. Vincent and the Guardian Angel, to the right and left of the lawn. In the same year, 1929, the large cross in the cemetery was erected. Under the supervision of the engineer, Mr. Schaeffer, the older boys made the concrete shaft, and were quite proud when it proved a successful undertaking.

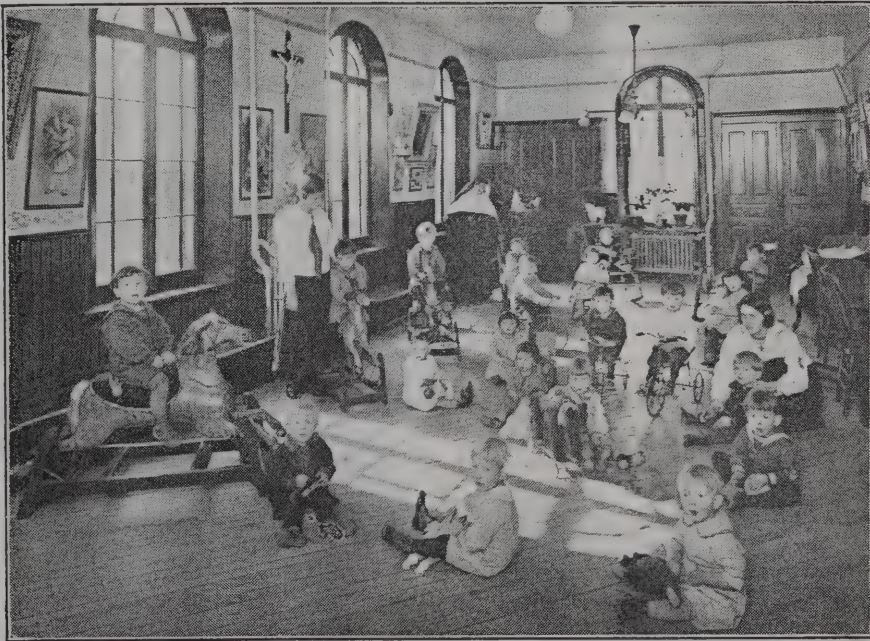
As if to safeguard what had been done during this period, the last improvement was the erection of a wire fence, 10 ft. high and 3000 ft. long. The ground being very irregular, over 3000 cu. yds. of earth were required to fill in the many holes and low places. The total expenditures amounted to \$5,217.94. By taking advantage of the opportunity offered through streets and sewerage building operations in the vicinity, sufficient earth and material were acquired for this purpose. In the same manner approximately 100 ft. of dangerous swamp land along the Delaware were converted into solid ground.

The period from 1924-1930 may be truly called one of exceptional development in the Home. In no other period of its history has it experienced such a sudden change. The only years that would in any way bear comparison are those of 1884-1885. This progress was due



CRUCIFIXION IN THE CEMETERY

entirely to the harmonious cooperation in utilizing the opportunities of the time, on the part of those responsible for the welfare of the Home. More than \$420,000 were expended. Yet, large as the sum may appear, the Managers did not fall a victim to the lure of prosperity and the spirit of the time, namely, in assuming heavy financial obligations with the hope that prosperity would continue indefinitely. It adhered strictly to the old proven system of financing the Home, not to undertake any project unless the necessary funds were on hand, and then to use these most advantageously. In this respect, no one deserves more commendation than the veteran treasurer, Mr. Joseph Weweler, who thereby followed in the footsteps of his unforgettable father. As a result, great things were accomplished and the Home preserved from the burden of debt when others were unexpectedly surprised by the years of depression.



CHILDREN'S PLAY ROOM

LIFE IN THE HOME

With respect to its interior history, the separation of the Home from St. Hubert's parish was no doubt the most outstanding event. This meant, on the one hand, the loss of many valuable educational factors, but, on the other hand, the abolishing of various difficulties. The Home from now on constituted an independent, self-governing institution. The children were attached more closely to the Home and the latter enjoyed the undivided attention of its directors.

The health of the children was the best possible. Epidemics are entirely unknown, and it is very seldom that even a case of serious sickness is recorded. From September, 1925, until his death, May, 1929, Dr. Heck, a man of deep religious convictions, and filled with great love for the orphans, cared for their physical welfare. The great confidence the children had in him still further increased the value of his services. Another factor that favorably promoted the good health of the children was the participation in sports, on the part of both boys and girls. Under the guidance of their chaplain the boys gradually developed an excellent baseball team that eventually became the dread of the neighboring teams. Just as an example, during the season of 1931, they lost but five out of thirty-five games, and opened the following season with 12 successive victories. Interest in sport was maintained through frequent visits to the ball parks of the "Philadelphia Athletics" and the "Phillies." The Board procured the uniforms for the "St. Vincent Eagles" and gladly met other necessary expenses. It likewise permitted the boys to play on outside fields.

The older girls, not to be outdone, organized a gymnastic club under the name of "True Blue Club." Emma Weber, a former orphan of the Home, and now a graduate teacher of physical culture, is in charge. The superior, Sister M. Bartholomew, provided the gymnasium suits.

With the organization of a company of St. George Cadets in 1927, interest in this direction was still further stimulated. Lieutenant Fratis of the U. S. Army took charge and superintended regular drill work for the next four years. He was succeeded in 1931 by Lennert Fritz. Our Company No. "J" is considered the best trained in the district.

In strong contrast to this modern system of group formation in Homes to permit a more individual treatment of the children, do we therefore find the abolition of the nursery in 1929. It was as old as the Home, and had embraced all the children from two to six years. Two floors on the south wing of the centre building had offered them a recreation hall, dormitory and dining room. With the abolition of the nursery, each of the older boys and girls had to take care of a smaller one. Regarding the girls, this method contributed much to develop their motherly spirit, and a sense of personal responsibility, but with respect to the boys, the solution proved a little more difficult. Through the erection of the new building the older and younger boys have been separated and each group given its own sister in charge. This division made a temporary solution of the problem easier. How-

ever, it is not improbable that in time the nursery system will again be reinstated.

As a result of new legislation curbing child labor, and the higher standard of requirements demanded in practical life, the Home during this period, saw itself confronted with new problems concerning its older children. But here, also, a satisfactory solution was found. — For talented children, who, after completing their grammar school course could not be sent to their parents, Sister Zita obtained scholarships in business colleges or high schools, and the number of these children is increasing yearly. Strayer's College has granted a scholarship since 1924, as have also the business schools of St. Peter's, St. Boniface, and St. Leo's. The Northeast Catholic High School for boys, and the Hallahan High School for girls have also assisted the Home. This attendance at other schools is also of great value in the child's inner development, namely, it offers a transition period from the routine life of the institution to that of complete self determination after dismissal from the Home.



CHILDREN VISITING "PUBLIC LEDGER"

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

United with the demand for a broader education, we also find a growing interest in the welfare of the children in later years. In order, therefore, to uphold and strengthen the relations between them and the Home after their departure, the Alumni Association was founded on February 23, 1930. To obtain God's blessing for the association, Father Behr, the president of the Home, celebrated a solemn high Mass and in a stirring sermon reminded his hearers of the many advantages the Home offers its children, concluding that gratitude now places the obligation upon its former charges to take an active interest in the further development of the Home. Benediction and Te Deum concluded the religious program. It was followed by a banquet at which 112 former pupils participated. In the auditorium an entertainment was given by the children and then the election for the first officer's was held. Miss Mary Hermann, was chosen as president, Miss Emma Weber, vice-president, Mrs. Louise Nothoff, treasurer, and Miss Helen Marchak secretary. The annual dues were fixed at one dollar. The second Sunday of May was decided on as "Home Coming Day." On the same Sunday the May procession with the crowning of the statue of our Blessed Lady takes place. It is also "Mother's Day." The celebrations on this day are almost identical with those of its inauguration day. The Board has likewise reserved a large reception room for the exclusive convenience of the alumni. As a token of gratitude towards the Home, every year the association sponsors a card party on a large scale. In this manner besides the financial aid, the association has also won new friends for the Home. In 1933 a sum of money was set aside for boys who desire to enter the priesthood.



FATHER ROTH AND GRADUATION CLASS

THE NEW CHAPLAINCY

As a consequence of its separation from St. Hubert's in 1924, the Home for the second time in its history was spiritually orphaned in not having a pastor. But as in the past, so now the Redemptorist fathers at least temporarily filled the vacancy. They could not do so permanently as their rule binds them to a community life in their own houses. The father acting as chaplain for the orphanage had to commute daily, and for that reason, when asked they gladly vacated this post in favor of the German Augustinian Fathers on the 2nd of February, 1925. The new chaplain was Father Gelasius Kraus, Ph.D. and previously professor at the Colleges of his Order in Muennerstadt, Germany; Venlo, Holland, and Villanova, Pennsylvania. On being appointed superior of the newly founded monastery of St. Rita in Racine, Wisconsin, he left the orphanage in the late summer of the same year. His successor Father Francis Roth had but recently arrived from Germany, and took charge on September 28, 1925. He remained until July, 1932.

Being an independent chaplaincy, with no parochial obligations, the services could now be adapted entirely to the needs and receptive ability of the children. As a result we see before midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, little girls dressed as angels marching in procession up the aisles carrying a statue of the Infant Saviour to place it in the crib. They are followed by the other children all of whom in turn then greet the new born King. The celebrations of former years e.g. Forty Hours Devotion, First Holy Communion, May Processions, Corpus Christi, and the blessing of the babies on the feast of the Innocent Children were retained with all their former splendor. The Association of the Holy Childhood made remarkable progress. In 1928 the orphans gave \$150 for the redemption of the heathen children. This means that each of the older children saved one dollar from the spending money received on visiting day. The letters they received from the director of the Propagation of the Faith, or even Missionary Bishops were read publicly from the altar and served to maintain their interest.

In July, 1932, Father Roth was transferred to St. Rita's, Racine, Wis., again as successor to Father Kraus. It was at St. Rita's that the "History of the Orphanage" was completed. Father Athanasius Pape, formerly assistant at the Church of St. Nicholas of Tolentine in New York City, became his successor. During his short period of activity there, which was still further curtailed through serious illness, Father Pape founded a Sodality of the Children of Mary for the girls, and a Sodality of the Junior Holy Name Society for the boys. These sodalities are exclusively for the older children and aim to accustom the child to sodality life, also to prepare it for the transition to parish life.



REV. FRANCIS XAVIER ROTH, O. S. A.
"The Memoirist"

CENTRALIZATION OF CHILD WELFARE

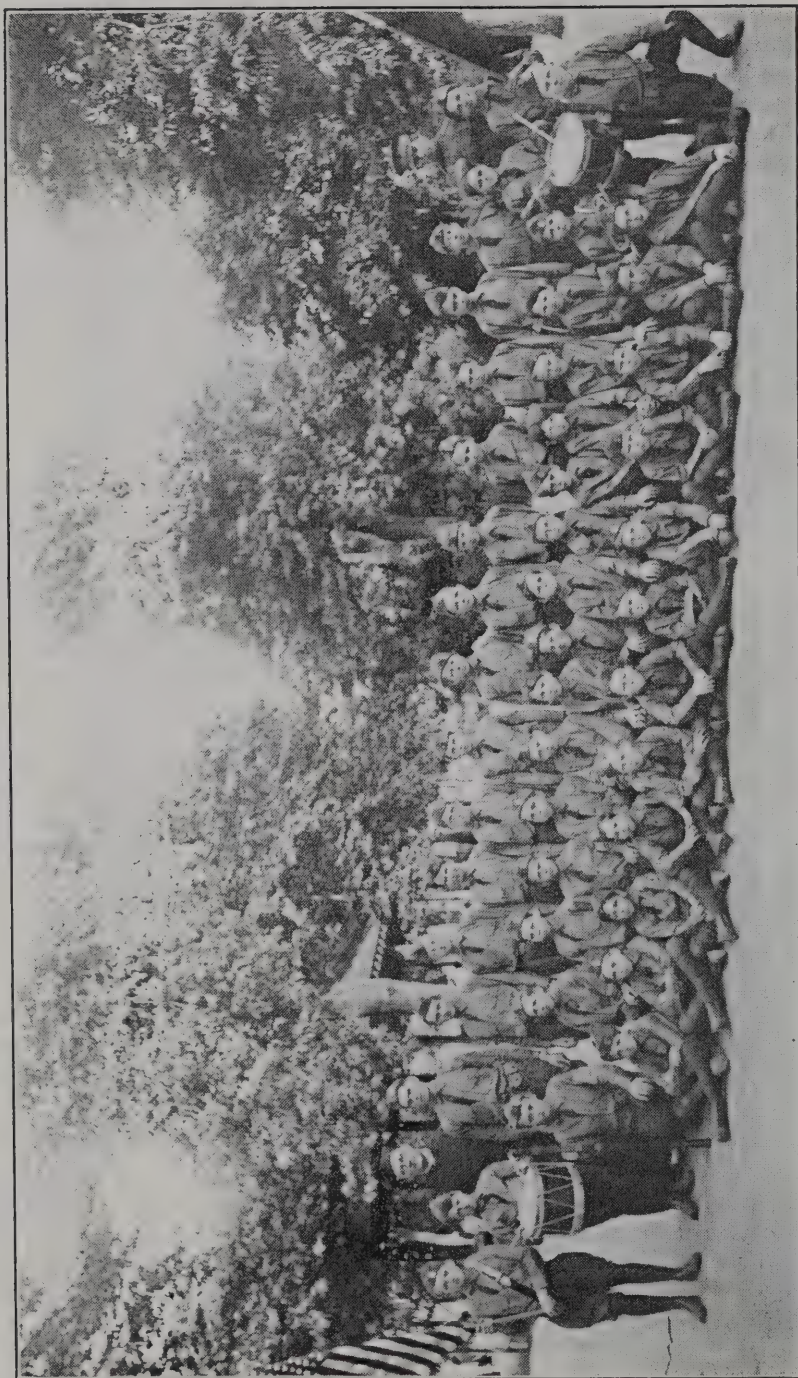
St. Vincent's was founded by German Catholics, a fact that was to direct its policy in the reception of children. As a rule only children of German parishes or German descent were admitted. After 1900, numerous appeals for reception were made in behalf of children of other nationalities. But the Home deviated from its policy only to the extent of accepting children from the neighboring parishes. All other petitions were referred to their own national Homes.

Yet the time had come in which a new policy was to be adopted. In Philadelphia a happy cooperation between the State Welfare organizations and Catholic Institutions had existed for many years. Catholic children were sent as a rule to Catholic orphanages in order to safeguard their faith. Catholic orphans of German descent were placed in St. Vincent's whether they belonged to one of the twelve national parishes or not. The managers of St. Vincent's never refused children recommended by these secular organizations.

In 1914, Archbishop Prendergast established the Catholic Children's Bureau which was to transact all business between the Juvenile Court or other secular agencies and the Catholic Children's Institutions of his Diocese. This Bureau achieved a remarkable record in the eighteen years of its existence. The efficiency in legal and financial matters was considerably heightened. The placing of children was made easier because the Bureau was free to provide for children in Homes where vacancies were found. Since the arrival of the first "Bureau Children" in December of 1914, their number has been growing constantly. Of the 194 children in 1931, nearly one half or 96 were admitted through the bureau.

By its cooperation with the Catholic Children's Bureau, the Home also received city and county aid, a source of revenue of which it had been unjustly deprived in the past, because the state has the same moral obligations towards Catholic institutions as towards its own. First of all because it must respect the liberty of conscience of its members, and secondly because it has the duty to care for all its children. This financial assistance was considerable. The children's board increased from \$2,131.05 in 1900 to \$11,750.00 in 1932.

Besides these changes, several other resolutions having reference to the family circumstances of the children deserve mention. It was resolved that no child shall be admitted when both parents are still living, except they are seriously ill or in a hospital. Then again it was decided not to accept children of divorced or separated parents. The Home did not wish to support this evil in any way whatsoever. The stipulation was also made that in case of remarriage of either father or mother they would again have to care for their children. Likewise, father or mother should not have the right of taking only one child from the Home if they had placed several of approximately the same age. Either all or none. The reason is evident. If a mother can care for one child, she should also be able to care for all. If this is not possible, all are to remain in the Home. It is also to safeguard the child that the managers decreed no child could be removed from the Home during the school year.



KNIGHTS OF ST. GEORGE CADETS

THE RECENT YEARS

Times and circumstances often change rapidly. Drunk with the luxuries and comforts of a period of unprecedented prosperity, and blinded by the hopes and promises of a golden future, our country unexpectedly found itself in the most serious economic crisis of its existence. The evil effects also reached St. Vincent's. Today the Board is confronted with the problem of maintaining what has been accomplished, and at least for the time being to abandon its plans for further material progress. The parents too, as a rule unemployed, can no longer meet their obligations, and bank failures have reduced many supporters of the Home to poverty. But the history of the Home which already records five depressions gives hope that it will also survive the present one without sustaining any irreparable loss. However, it will demand many sacrifices as experience teaches that institutions without funds, and depending entirely on charity for support feel such a reduction of income most acutely.

Again it is also true that material progress alone can not and dare not be the sole criterion of the efficiency and standard of an institution. The present superior, Sister M. Bartholomew, is wisely utilizing the present period to strengthen and develop the inner life of the Home.

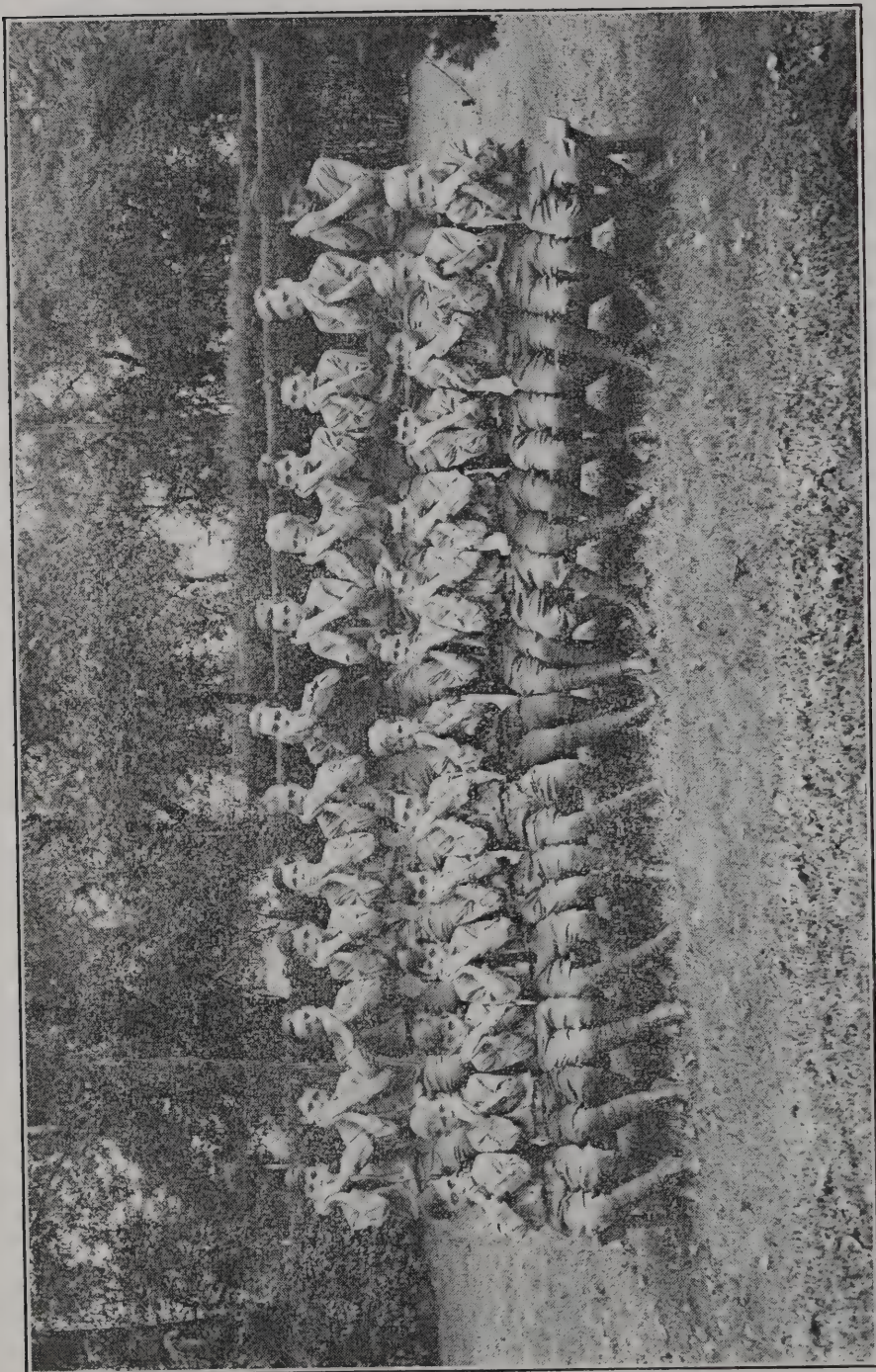
Sister Bartholomew arrived on August 30, 1930. She came from St. Peter's Orphan Asylum in Newark, N. J., of which she had been superior during the preceding six years. Sister Zita was her successor in Newark.

In order to avoid the mechanical recitation of prayers on the part of the children, Sister Bartholomew frequently changes them. The new superior likewise founded two sodalities to better meet the spiritual needs of the various children with regard to age. In February, 1933, she organized a harmonica band composed of twenty-five boys. They have regular practice hours under the direction of an instructor of the "Philadelphia Harmonica Symphony."

Relieved of all other responsibilities, such as the publishing of a newspaper or as a parish church, the orphanage is exclusively striving at present for the one goal, namely to serve as a model Home for the neediest of all, the homeless orphan; and to reach this aim, it is concentrating all its efforts.

In spite of what has been accomplished, there are still many problems awaiting a solution, many things to be learned from the systems followed in similar modern institutions. The "group system" for example would be a welcome innovation and would no doubt have been introduced had the necessary number of sisters been available. It is hoped that the Alumni Association will bring nearer to a solution the question of how to acquaint the children with practical life, and how to guide and help them in later years.

This is the history of the Home to the present time. The future is a closed book whose pages time alone can turn. St. Vincent's was always fortunate in finding helpers to carry out its projects in the past. May a kind Providence bless its future and send capable and willing hands to accomplish the tasks which the future may bring.



HARMONICA BAND — (1933)

THE SPIRIT OF ST. VINCENT'S

Chapters from the House Chronicle

CIVIL WAR NERVES

1865. "On August 9, the gardener, Mr. Schneider, and one of the boys were mowing along the river bank. Another boy watching them, saw a serpent, jumped aside, and right into the swinging scythe which cut his calf to the shinbone. The house doctor being away on a trip, several hours passed before medical aid could be obtained. Meanwhile the injured limb was temporarily held together and applications with alum water were made. When the doctor arrived he dressed the wound being aided by one of the sisters.

Meanwhile, Sister Romana had gathered the other children in the chapel to pray for the injured lad. Suddenly one of the boys fainted. This frightened the others to such a degree, that in a few moments all the children left the chapel running through the doors and jumping through the windows, weeping and lamenting. It took several minutes before we found the reason for their terror. Thanks be to God, no one was hurt.

KIND DONORS

1871. "Six boys of Holy Trinity Parish brought presents to our children which they, of their own accord, had collected in the parish.

1873, May 23. "After solemn vespers, a delegation of Holy Trinity Parish visited the orphans to present a lamb which had been raffled at a picnic in Philadelphia. The winner had given it to the orphans. This gift was accompanied by another of ice cream and cakes.

1873. "Mr. Fehrle donated a picture of Our Mother of Perpetual Help which was placed in the centre of the main altar, and solemnly blessed on May 28th by the Rev. Fr. Rector Wm. Loewekamp, C.S.S.R. Following the dedication, a solemn high mass was celebrated for the benefactor. St. Peter's choir sang Buehler's Mass No. 5."

EMBARRASSMENT

1874. "Friday, March 20th, at 12 o'clock, Right Rev. Bishop Wood, Rev. Father Loewekamp, C.S.S. R., and several clergymen who had attended the funeral Mass for the deceased Father Kuenzer of Bridesburg, arrived entirely unexpected. They had not yet dined. Since we had neither fish nor any other suitable Lenten food at the Home, a man selling oysters saved the situation. We bought several hundred and quickly prepared them, not noticing that they were spoiled. Only through the remaining ones, did we find out that we had served bad oysters to our distinguished guests."



GIRLS' RECREATION ROOM

A GHOST STORY

1875. "On October 25th, Catherine Steinmetz, the daughter of our farmer, died of dropsy and inflammation of the throat, the consequences of scarlet fever. During the night from the 25th to the 26th, two young men of Tacony kept the vigil beside the body. When they left for home in the morning at one o'clock, they saw a white ghost in a garden along their path. It terrified them so, that without saying a word they breathlessly returned, rushed into their house saying that they had seen a big ghost in the garden of the orphanage, on the same spot where the old cemetery had been. In the morning the ghost proved to be an old white horse which had formerly been attached to the Home and had been sold but a few weeks previously. During the night, mentioned above, it had deserted its new master and returned to its old pasture."

THE BLESSED MOTHER HELPS

1875. "At 9 o'clock in the evening of November 6th, Henrietta Mayer was seriously sick; she had dropsy which followed an attack of scarlet fever. Believing her near death, we offered her every assistance. We gave her a few drops of water of Lourdes with the petition that the dear Blessed Mother might assist her in her last hour. After taking the water, she opened her eyes, smiled at us very sweetly, took her medal, kissed it, and talked as if she were entirely well. From then on her condition improved steadily and in a few weeks she was able to leave her bed."

A similar cure is reported about Mrs. Steinmetz.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PASSAGE IN THE HOUSE CHRONICLE

1879, Nov. 6th. "A statue of the Sacred Heart, a gift of the Board of Managers valued at \$75.00, was solemnly blessed by Archbishop Wood. A solemn high Mass was sung by the Rev. Fr. Rector Hollaus, C.S.S.R. with Fr. Holz and Fr. Koelscher as assistants. It was attended by several priests, the Board of Managers and many guests from Philadelphia. The Most Rev. Archbishop gave a beautiful address also granting permission to conduct devotions in honor of the Sacred Heart in the chapel on each First Friday of the month. After the reverend guests had dined, the children entertained them in school with an address and a few songs. The Rev. Fechtel on going home promised to begin the devotions on the following day, Friday, Nov. 7th. However, he was unable to come. We had received neither communion nor heard mass. Relieving each other from time to time both sisters and orphans spent the day in adoration in honor of the Sacred Heart, praying for the grace of a priest of their own. To our great joy, Rev. Fr. Freude arrived at 6 o'clock in the evening with orders from the Most Rev. Archbishop to fill the vacant position as chaplain and pastor. As a conclusion to our first devotion to the Sacred Heart he gave us benediction with the Blessed Sacrament."



GROUP OF BOYS — (1933)

A HOLY DEATH

1881. "On August 9th, the candidate Theresa Schnorr died; she had been sent to us by the sisters of St. Peter's, since the doctor had ordered country air for her. She arrived seriously ill and talked irrationally all night. When the doctor, who had been called arrived he diagnosed her case as nervous fever and pneumonia. On Sunday, August 7, she had received Extreme Unction but could not receive Holy Viaticum since she did not fully regain consciousness. She prayed much during her whole sickness and at normal intervals was grateful that we permitted her to remain because she feared she might be sent back to her parents. Strange as it may seem, at 2 o'clock in the morning of the day of her death, she knelt in bed, folded her hands and opened her mouth as if receiving Holy Communion; then she lay down quietly and prayed as if she had received it. A holy fear gripped the sister who was nursing her when she saw the sick one kneeling on the bed so piously in her delirium. A few moments later the patient told the nurse she would go to heaven this very day. She died in the afternoon at 5 o'clock in the presence of a priest who recited the prayers for the dying. Several sisters, her father, and grandfather were also present."

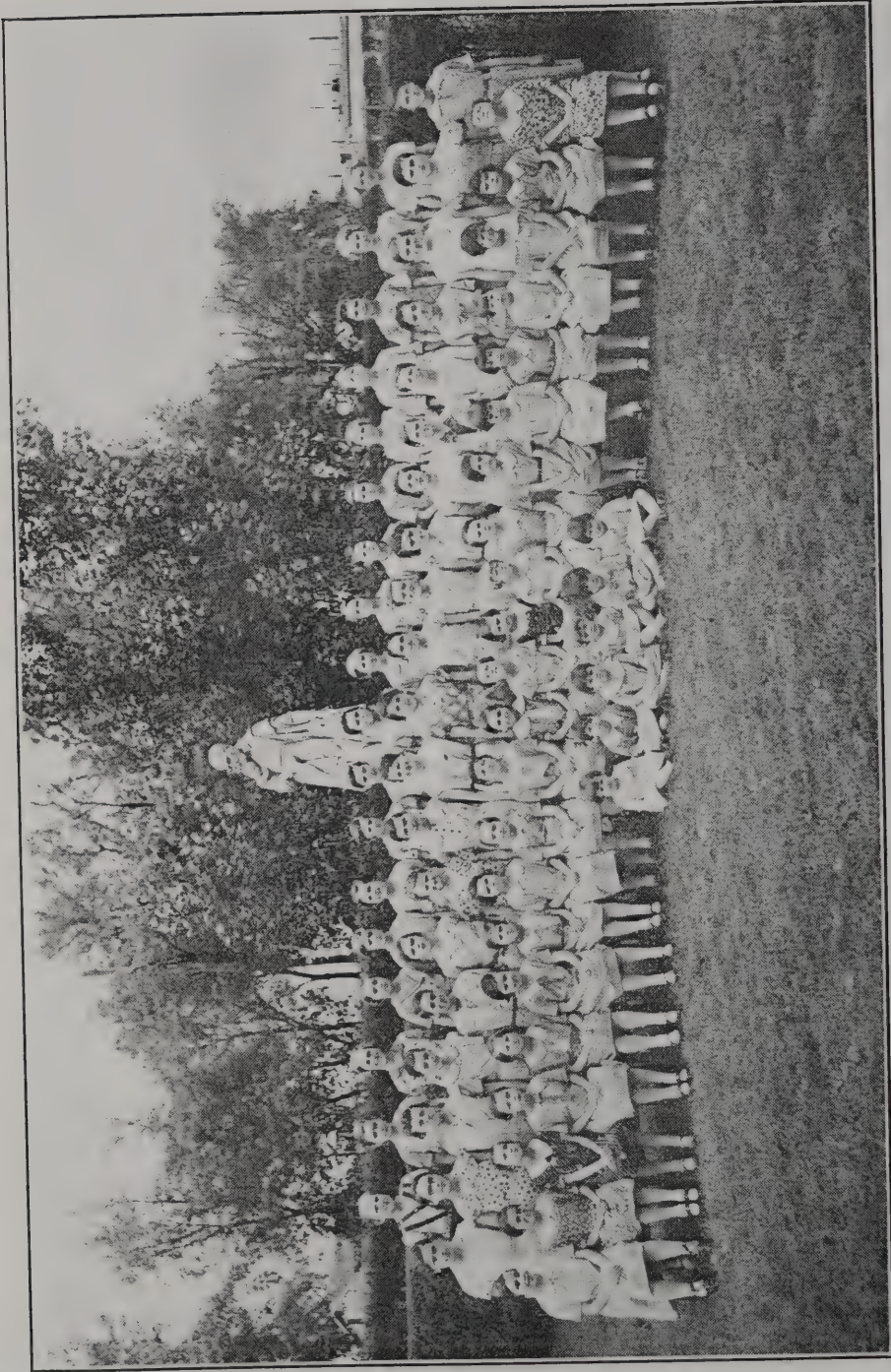
A BUCKET BRIGADE

1884. During the many improvements of this year "an artesian well had also been drilled to supply us with sufficient water, but it proved to be a failure. The old kitchen stove and pump had been removed and the new stove in connection with the tank could not be used without water. Therefore, we were obliged to carry the necessary water for the kitchen up to the tank until a new source was found. This work was gladly done by the children. They stood in a row from the old well in the yard leading up to the roof beside the tank. The boys stood on the fire-escape; the girls and smaller boys inside the house. They handed the full buckets to one another on the outside. The empty ones went back by the hands of the little ones who stood on the stair-way inside the house. This work required from one to two hours daily.

On the fourth of July the tank was filled for the first time. It was an occasion for great rejoicing."

ONE OF OUR BEST

1888. "Frederick Bock, born September 23, 1869, was received into the Home July 28, 1880. When he was fourteen years old he went to the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Ammendale. After a few years he received the habit and the new name Festus. He was pious and useful which earned him a good testimonial from his Novice-Master. After a few months he was afflicted with a cough. He was therefore dismissed on February 15, 1888, with the permission to return as soon as his health was restored. Since he was a full orphan and had no relatives, the Orphan Board granted the request of the



GROUP OF GIRLS — (1933)

sisters to nurse him in the Home. The first few weeks he improved but soon the illness increased and we found that he had galloping tuberculosis. He had wished so much to teach children in school, but resigned to God's Holy will, ready to give his life as a sacrifice. He passed his time in prayer and meditation in order to prepare himself for the hour of death. Smiling he said to the boy who was with him on April 16th, at 7 P. M. "Go and call Sister Superior and tell her that I'm going to die." Thinking it was a joke of the Brother the boy did not heed his request, but accidentally, Sister Superior came about the same time to visit him. He sat on the side of the bed and looked like one dying; he smiled at sister, she sent at once for Father Freude, who gave him holy Viaticum since he had already received Extreme Unction. After his Thanksgiving he died, sitting in the same chair on which he had received Holy Communion. In him our Home has another intercessor at the throne of God."

FRIGHT

1889. "In the night between the fifth and sixth of January, the girls heard a noise in their bedroom as if something had fallen in the garret. Since all the children were in bed and nothing else was heard, no further attention was paid to it. Suddenly at 4 o'clock in the morning, a loud crash resounded throughout the house, which even shook the walls of the other buildings causing the windows to rattle as if there had been an earthquake. Looking for the cause, we found that the beam on which the tank containing 5,000 gallons of water had been fastened, had settled a few inches. This tore the other beams off of their joints causing a tremendous jerk. The Orphan Board, therefore, ordered four beams to be put under the tank in the floor below, to avert all danger."

SR. FREDERICA'S FIRST YEAR

1896. "In the beginning of November, the Rev. Father Rector Speidel presented our chapel with a statue of the Holy Infant of Prague, which the Orphans venerated every day by a special devotion. A great love for the Holy Infant of Prague soon sprang up, not only among the orphans, but also among the adults of the parish." Many blessings were attributed to this devotion.

1896. On December sixth, the feast of St. Nicholas, the children were pleasantly surprised. When they had assembled for dinner in the refectory and had said their table prayers, they proceeded to pull the chairs from under the tables; each child found its chair already occupied by a stocking filled with goodies, apples and nuts. The surprise, the enthusiasm, and the joy of the children was very great indeed. Though the children had been richly supplied with goodies each St. Nicholas's Day, yet this was something new.

1896. On Holy Christmas morning our girls for the first time wore white veils in the chapel. It was a great surprise for young and old. It also made a deep impression on Father Freude.



MOST REV. CLEMENS FUHL, O. S. A.,
Provincial General Augustinian Order in midst of Altar Boys

THE ARCHBISHOP'S SILVER JUBILEE

1897. On May 11, we celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the Most Rev. Archbishop P. J. Ryan. The Most Rev. Archbishop arrived accompanied by Father Hiltermann at 2 o'clock. The front entrance of the orphanage was decorated with flags and Japanese Lanterns. After the reception by the Reverend clergy and sisters, he was led into the gayly decorated hall where the following program was rendered.

1. Welcome—sung by the large boys.
2. Congratulations—by the little ones.
3. Wand Drill—by the girls.
4. The Prayer of the Wild Flowers.
5. Watch Over Him—sung by the whole school.

"The Prayer of the Wild Flowers" was a poem set to music. It contained many beautiful and tender thoughts, and made a deep impression upon all the audience present. About eight priests and the members of the Board were present. The Most Rev. Archbishop delivered a very paternal and loving address to the children. Luncheon was served in the dining room, which had been decorated with flowers and plants. The Most Rev. Archbishop always calls himself "grandpa" when talking to the orphans, and every Christmas he sends 100 lbs. of candy which is labeled "Grandpa's Candy."

A NARROW ESCAPE

1904. "On Sunday, November 20th, at 2.45 P. M. just before Vespers, our new gas stove exploded with a terrific noise. Sister Superior Frederica and Mrs. Krause had just left the old kitchen after inspecting the stove, when the explosion occurred. Had they remained a few minutes longer they surely would have been hurt by the pieces of iron flying about. Sister Polycarp was kneeling beside the stove in a low position to light the gas. Fortunately, all the pieces of iron flew over her head; but she received such a shock through the explosion that she had to be put to bed. However, she soon recovered; the special protection of God was surely visible in this accident. The cause of this explosion was this: we had forgotten to inform the House of Correction, from where the gas was obtained, of our new gas stove. It happened on Sunday, that the gas was turned off in the morning, but later on in the afternoon without Sister Polycarp's knowledge it was turned on again. Had she known of this, she would have regulated the stove. The flow of gas was so strong that it exploded violently when she came near with a burning match. The firm willingly substituted a new stove since we had used the first one scarcely a week."

A SAD ACCIDENT

1915. "A great misfortune occurred this morning. One of the boys, Francis Koelble, ten years of age, started to slide down the banister from the top floor of the fire tower. Another boy, washing the stairs, for it was Saturday, warned him of this dangerous play. But he answered, "I know what I am doing." Shortly after, the disobedient boy, whom the sister had also warned previously, lost his balance and fell forty feet striking a long table on the first floor. Doctor

Keiser was immediately called. His examination revealed a fracture of the skull, the leg, and serious interior injuries. He gave orders that the boy be taken at once to the hospital. He received Extreme Unction but couldn't go to confession; owing to the fall, he had lost consciousness. He had also broken his shoulder blade. The poor boy suffered terribly. But God, in His mercy, ended his suffering. On Monday night, he died in peace." N.B. Since then a device was placed on all banisters of the Home to make sliding down impossible.

GRATITUDE

1921. During this and the following week, the boys' hall was newly painted. Mr. Leonard Stadler, one of our former orphans, did it gratuitously.

HELP FOR THE INDIANS

1922. On May 7th, during high Mass, Rev. Wm. Huffer appealed to the congregation for aid in behalf of the Indians. During his address he had two Indian children, a boy of ten and a girl of thirteen years stand at the foot of the altar in their Indian attire. They impressed both young and old. In the afternoon, our Reverend Father gave a picture show of Indian life, in the hall below the church. A large number of people attended. He realized about \$184.00.

A PUPIL OF ST. VINCENT'S ELECTED BISHOP

1923. On November 12th, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Gercke offered Mass in our Church at 8 o'clock, during which the orphans sang beautiful hymns. After Holy Mass, the Bishop addressed the children and the people. This being Armistice Day, many of the parishioners were present, and His Lordship gave them all a heart-to-heart talk. After the Bishop had partaken of his breakfast, the Rev. J. P. Ludwig brought him to the girls' dining room, where all the school children and orphans had assembled to give him a hearty greeting, first with a song and then with an address delivered by Clarence Ingledue, an orphan. One of the orphan boys presented to him a bouquet of flowers. Then the children sang "Watch Over Him!" In an address he declared that he never could forget St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum and the good sisters who instructed him, and that he would always especially at the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, pray that God would bless the sisters and their untiring labors."

FIRE AT NIGHT

1924. June 11th, a fire broke out in the Glue Factory in our neighborhood. At 4 o'clock in the morning a policeman aroused the sisters in the main building by ringing the dinner bell in our yard and by calling to them. In a few minutes some sisters were ready to hurry to the boys' department since that was in imminent danger. Here the sisters and the policeman wakened the inmates. Upon hearing the usual signal for rising and the policeman's admonition to dress quietly but quickly, they did so, while blessing themselves and saying their accustomed prayer. They were then led to the church to pray, the gentleman waiting for the last child. Scarcely had the children begun their fervent prayers, when the wind which had been directly east and, therefore, brought the flames directly toward us, suddenly

turned towards the Delaware. We later learned that our greatest danger was from a large tank filled with sulphurous acid which, however, was constantly attended to by the firemen. Thanks be to the good God who so visibly protected us and our Home!"

JOY TURNED TO SORROW

1932. On July 27th, about 100 of our boys had a picnic at the beautiful place of the Marist Fathers at St. Mary's Manor, Langhorne, Pa. Our new chaplain, Father Pape, had prepared it most carefully. Of all the pleasures awaiting them, our boys liked most a refreshing bath in the shallow lake. They were shouting with joy and pleasure. There seemed to be no danger because the greatest depth of the lake was not more than four feet, and Father Pape and Father Schramm were amongst the boys. Father Schramm, who was bathing, stepped upon something soft and sudden fear came upon him; he reached into the water and brought up the body of Andrew Fairchild, a boy of nine years. Father Schramm and Father Roth worked for more than an hour trying to revive the boy, while the other children went to the chapel to pray. Father Pape gave Andrew Extreme Unction. A doctor arrived within a few minutes and gave him several injections, but all was in vain. The boy had died of heart failure. He had always been short of breath. The undertaker, Mr. Fluehr, told us afterwards that no water was found in his lungs. Strange that none of the many boys who were around him noticed his disappearance. The lake was only 2½ feet deep where he was found. On Saturday we buried him in our cemetery, and many were the tears shed by our children. It was a serious warning, to be prepared.



REV. ATHANASIUS PAPE, O. S. A. AND FIRST COMMUNICANTS



Rev. Athanasius Pape, O. S. A.,
Chaplain



John W. Speckman, Esq., *Counsellor*

BOARD OF MANAGERS FROM 1830-1933

BOARD OF MANAGERS 1855-1858

Holy Trinity Parish

Rev. P. Carbon, President, 1855-1862 — Vice-President till 1871.

Laymembers:

Henry Daudt, 1855-58; John P. Persch, 1858-
Bernhard Huelsemann, 1855-
John Seiberlich, 1855-

St. Peter's Parish

Rev. Lawrence Holzer, C. SS. R., Rector, 1855-61.

Laymembers:

Henry Schmitt, 1855-57; John Knoll, 1857-58; John Schimpf 1858-
Michael Haas, 1855-56; George Ruck, 1856-
Lawrence Heyer, 1855-56; H. Foertsch, 1856-57; Charles Behlen,
1857-58.
Charles Bierbreuer 1858-

BOARD OF MANAGERS IN THE YEAR 1870

Rev. William Loewekamp, C. SS. R., President;
Rev. P. Carbon, Rev. A. M. Grundner, O. S. B. V. M., Rev. Herman
Deppman, O. F. M., Vice-Presidents.

Laymembers:

Louis Koch	Andrew Hartmann
Henry Kirchmann	Jacob Kirchem
H. Nieland	John Acker
Jacob Michel	Anthony Herrmann
Henry Jung	Peter O. Kreider

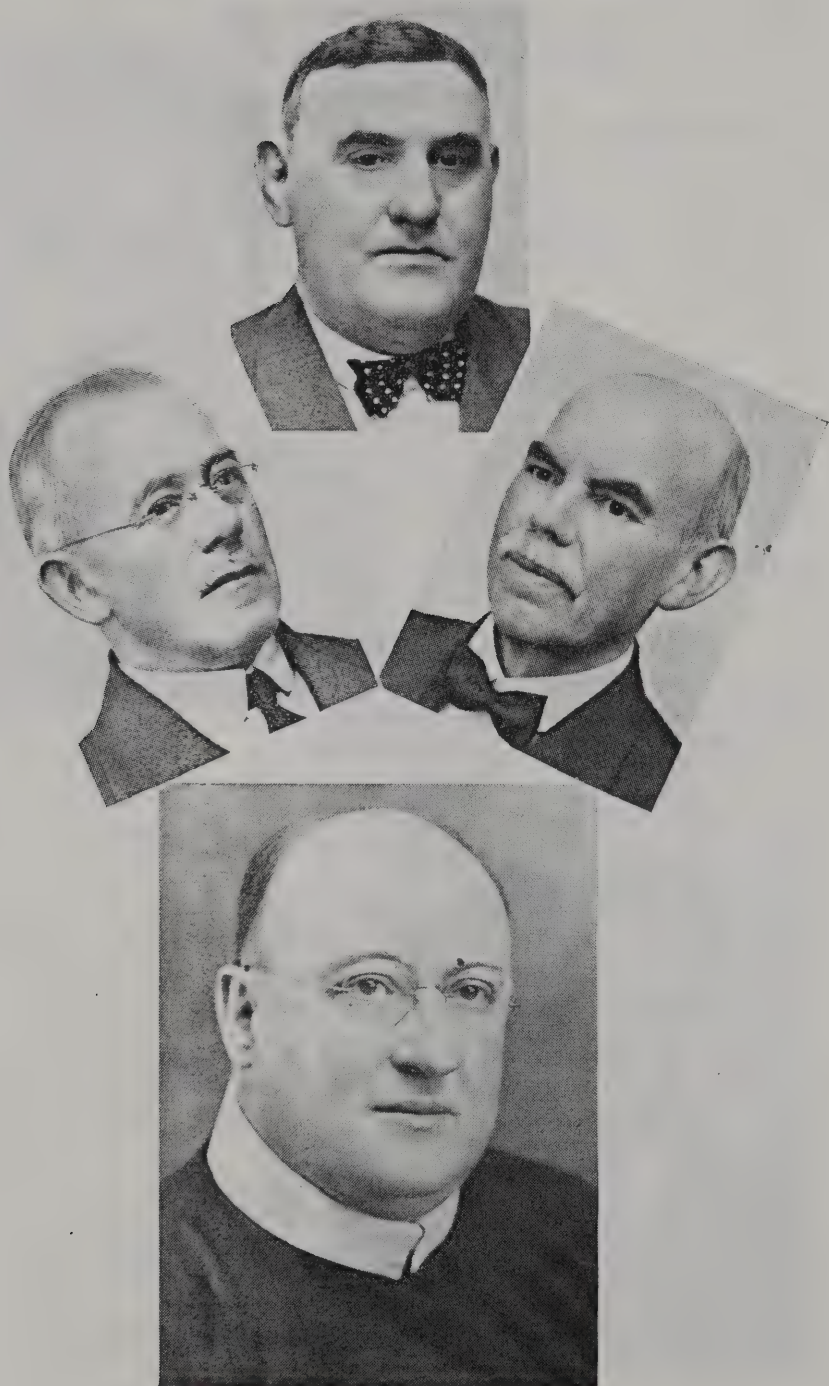
BOARD OF MANAGERS FOR THE YEAR 1876

Rev. George Sniet, C. SS. R., President.
Rev. H. Schick, Rev. E. O. Hiltermann, Vice-Presidents.
Jacob Kirchem, Treasurer; Joseph Leibrand, Secretary.

Laymembers:

Louis Koch	Frank Bellwoar
Martin Thomas	John Witzel
Sebastian Herr	Joseph Schnitzius
Jacob Michel	Henry Jung
Christian Krimm	C. Dubler
Joseph Schachte	Anthony Herrmann

BOARD OF MANAGERS, ST. PETER'S PARISH



Rev. Michael G. Will, C. SS. R., President
A. John Krimm, Secretary Charles Glaser

† Lorenz Golz

BOARD OF MANAGERS FROM 1880-1933

St. Peter's Church

Rectors and Presidents:

Rev. Joseph Wirth, C. SS. R., 1880-1887; Rev. Charles Sigl, C. SS. R., 1887-1890; Rev. Charles Schmidt, C. SS. R., 1890-1893; Rev. Fidelis Speidel, C. SS. R., 1893-1904; Rev. William Tewes, C. SS. R., 1904-1909; Rev. G. Hespelein, C. SS. R., 1909-1915; Rev. Francis Auth, C. SS. R., 1915-1918; Rev. F. X. Bader, C. SS. R., 1918-1924; Rev. John G. Behr, C. SS. R., 1924-1930; Rev. Michael G. Will, 1930-

Laymembers:

Christian Krimm, ? - 1904; Lorenz Golz, 1904-1934
Franz Heidel, ? - 1892; William Krause, 1892-1925; A. John Krimm, 1925-
Philipp Mueller, ? - 1880; John Kieffer, 1881-1915; John F. Kieffer, 1915-1925; Charles Glaser, 1925-

BOARD OF MANAGERS, HOLY TRINITY PARISH



Charles A. Fleck

Rev. John C. Daniel, *Vice President*
Werner Bretz

Adolph Frei

BOARD OF MANAGERS FROM 1880-1933

Holy Trinity Church

Rectors and Vice-Presidents:

Rev. Hubert Schick, 1874-1883; Rev. Ernest Otto Hiltermann, 1883-1909; Rev. Francis J. Hertkorn, 1909-1919; Rev. John Daniel, 1919-

Laymembers:

Jacob Kirchem, ? - 1886; John Galster, 1886-1887; August Trouwen, 1887-1892; John Speckman, 1892-1894; J. B. Meyer, 1894-1898; Christian Woerner, 1898; John Gaskemamnn, 1898-1904; Aloysius Michel, 1904-1918; Max Schultz, 1918; Adolph Frei, 1919-

George Hamann, ? - 1883; John Brueckner, 1883-1886; G. Hamann, 1886; John Galster, 1887; Joseph Obermann, 1887-1895; John Wohlfahrt, 1895-1901; Charles Fleck, 1901-

Francis Bellwoar, ? - 1893; August Trouwen, 1893-1894; Mathias Michels, 1894-1897; Gerhard Warnke, 1897-1900; Bernhard Becker, 1900-1923; John Schmitt, 1923-1932; Werner Bretz, 1932-

BOARD OF MANAGERS, ST. ALPHONSUS' PARISH



Rev. Francis J. Hertkorn, Vice President
Charles H. Speckman Joseph A. Weweler, Treasurer Anton Morgenthaler

BOARD OF MANAGERS FROM 1880-1933

St. Alphonsus' Church

Rectors and Vice-Presidents:

Rev. John B. Maus, ? - 1883; Rev. Hubert Schick, 1883-1886; Rev. John H. Badde, 1886-1890; Rev. Henry Stommel, 1890-1918; Rev. George Michel, 1918-1920; Rev. Francis J. Hertkorn, 1920-

Laymembers:

Hermann Weweler ? - 1901; Dr. Henry Horstmann, 1901-1909; August Sangmeister, 1909-1911; Anton Morgenthaler, 1911-
Peter Kitt ? - 1888; Jacob Borger, 1888-1896; Adam Mueller, 1896-1899; Henry Apeler, 1899-1905; Charles Bock, 1905-1906; Joseph A. Weweler, 1906-;
Philip Koob, 1880; Henry Brockhoff, 1881-1891; George Schmidt, 1891-1912; Charles H. Speckman, 1912-

BOARD OF MANAGERS, ST. BONIFACE' PARISH



Rev. Bernard Licking, C. SS. R., Vice President
Eugene Hirsch Jacob P. Lechner John C. Ostertag

BOARD OF MANAGERS FROM 1880-1933

St. Boniface Church

Rectors and Vice-Presidents:

Rev. Francis Schnuettgen, C. SS. R., 1877-1894; Rev. Ferdinand A. Litz, C. SS. R., 1884-1890; 1904-1909; Rev. Joseph Kautz, C. SS. R., 1890-1893; Rev. August Pringel, C. SS. R., 1893-1894; Rev. John Friedrich, C. SS. R., 1894-1898; Rev. Edward M. Weigel, C. SS. R., 1898-1904; Rev. Peter Grein, C. SS. R., 1909-1911; Rev. John M. Beierschmidt, C. SS. R., 1911-1917; 1921-1927; Rev. Joseph Raphael Wissel, C. SS. R., 1917-1921; Rev. Francis Dauenhauer, C. SS. R., 1924-1930; Rev. Joseph Funk, C. SS. R., 1930-1933; Rev. Bernard Licking, C. SS. R., 1933-

Laymembers:

Joseph Schachte, ? - 1880; 1886; 1889-1904; William Schaeffer, 1881-1883; George Altmeier, 1883-1884; Andrew Barthmeier, 1884-1888; Marcus Michel, 1888-1895; Franz Breitner, 1895-1903; Sebastian Thoma, 1904; George Weisbecker, 1905-1906; John T. Ehinger, 1906-1919; Eugene Hursch, 1919-
Christopher Fluehr, ? - 1886; 1887-1890; John Ostertag, 1890-1929; John C. Ostertag, 1929-
Joseph Anstedt, ? - 1881; Charles Schmitt, 1881-1887; F. X. Kletzel, 1887-1888; John F. Fluehr, 1904-1932; Jacob P. Leichner, 1932-

NAMES OF THE FIRST ORPHANS WHO CAME TO ST. VINCENT'S,
MARCH 2, 1859.

	age	Parish	
John Grimm	8 years,	St. Peter's	discharged 1866, 7 yrs. at Home
Rose Grimm	6 "	"	" 1861, 2 " " "
Charles Lorentz	7 "	"	" 1871, 12 " " "
Anthony Unsinn	9 "	"	" 1851, 2 " " "
Jacob Hoffer*	6 "	St. Peter's	" 1863, 4 " " "
Michael Hoffer	9 "	"	" 1863, 4 " " "
Maria Hoffer	8 "	"	" 1869, 10 " " "
Magdalen Lambert**	9 "	"	" 1869, 10 " " "
Amelia Dippenbach	5 "	"	" 1866, 7 " " "
Anna Schickel	4 "	Holy Trinity	Died 1869, 10 " " "
Michael Helmich	3 "	"	Dismissed 1870, 11 " " "

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*Jacob Hoffer in later years became the organist at All Saints Church, Bridesburg; and music teacher of the Home. His death in 1863 was the cause of great sorrow. (H. C. p. 23, Festschrift p. 15).

**Her brother Joseph Lambert arrived a day later and was dismissed in 1870. Mary entered the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters at Glen Riddle, Pa. So did Magdalen Lambert. Mary died as a Novice. On her death-bed she was allowed to make the three vows.

Taken from the Book of Admissions

[illegible]

a detailed account as to which parish, they came from.

**NUMBER OF SISTERS, ORPHANS AND DAY PUPILS
ATTENDING ST. VINCENT'S AT THE END
OF EACH YEAR.**

The following list was taken from the Annual Directory (Schematismus) of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. The number of orphans, however, present at the end of each year is from the records of the House Chronicle.

Year	Sisters	Candidates	Aspirants	Orphans	Day Pupils
1859	3	—	—	36	—
1860	3	—	—	50	—
1861	3	—	—	65	—
1862	—	—	—	91	—
1863	—	—	—	100	—
1864	5	—	2	120	30
1865	5	—	—	120	20
1866	4	—	5	131	—
1867	6	5	—	131	—
1868	6	—	3	135	32
1869	6	—	3	119	30
1870	6	—	3	122	30
1871	—	—	—	104	—
1872	8	—	3	116	45
1873	—	—	—	95	—
1874	—	—	—	107	—
1875	7	3	—	127	40
1876	—	—	—	125	—
1877	—	—	—	117	—
1878	—	—	—	122	—
1879	9	2	—	142	—
1880	9	2	—	124	—
1881	9	3	—	129	56
1882	9	—	—	164	—
1883	11	4	—	162	63
1884	12	4	—	186	—
1885	12	4	—	230	72
1886	13	4	—	250	72
1887	14	3	—	241	79
1888	16	3	—	227	85
1889	15	3	—	197	30
1890	15	2	—	209	37
1891	17	2	—	212	54
1892	19	4	—	212	61
1893	16	2	—	226	61
1894	16	4	—	230	62
1895	18	2	—	244	67

Year	Sisters	Candidates	Aspirants	Orphans	Day Pupils
1896	20	2	—	247	67
1897	20	2	—	251	57
1898	24	1	—	265	53
1899	23	1	—	226	20
1900	24	—	—	236	20
1901	24	—	—	—	61
1902	26	—	—	258	54
1903	27	—	—	276	60
1904	24	—	—	280	70
1905	25	—	—	285	78
1906	26	—	—	288	60
1907	24	—	—	256	52
1908	24	—	—	285	80
1909	25	—	—	235	70
1910	24	—	—	276	98
1911	23	—	—	268	110
1912	23	—	—	260	100
1913	21	—	—	242	110
1914	20	—	—	224	121
1915	—	—	—	258	—
1916	21	—	—	250	110
1917	21	—	—	264	116
1918	23	—	—	240	136
1919	27	—	—	235	129
1920	26	—	—	237	115
1921	25	—	—	219	115
1922	24	—	—	176	112
1923	27	—	—	177	—
1924	27	—	—	166	153
1925	24	—	—	199	155*
1926	22	—	—	201	—
1927	20	—	—	208	—
1928	20	1	—	200	—
1929	23	—	—	191	—
1930	21	—	—	189	—
1931	21	—	—	194	—
1932	21	—	—	187	—

*St. Hubert's opened a school of its own.

Dr. Victor L. Baker, is House Physician for the past five years, succeeding the late Dr. John A. Heck.

PRIESTS FROM ST. VINCENT'S ORPHAN ASYLUM

Rev. Francis Wagner, Trappist.

Rev. Father Kappes, Trappist.

Rev. Felician Wachendorfer, C. PP. S., ordained 1910,

Rev. Joseph Hermle, ordained 1912, deceased.

Rev. Edward Desmond, ordained 1913.

Rev. Charles Beckermann, O. S. A., ordained 1913, died 1932.

Rev. John Drabinski, O. S. A., ordained 1914, died 1927.

Rev. Raymond Horner, ordained 1925.

Rev. John Danz, ordained 1926.

Rev. Charles Schenkel, C. SS. R., ordained 1927.

Theological Students

Edward Schlick, St. Mary's Manor and Apostolic School,
S. Langhorne, Pa.

William Fairchild, St. Francis College, Staten Island, N. Y.

James E. Fairchild, St. Francis College, Staten Island, N. Y.

Edward Recker, St. Francis College, Staten Island, N. Y.

PRIESTS FROM ST. VINCENT'S PARISH

Most Rev. Daniel Gercke, D. D., Bishop of Tucson, Arizona,

Ordained June 1, 1901, consecrated November 6, 1923.*

Rev. Joseph Follman, ordained 1920, Pastor in Nashville, Tenn.

Rev. Albert Neidert, ordained 1914, Pastor in Aurora, Ill.

Theological Students

George Lepping, St. Mary's Manor and Apostolic School,
S. Langhorne, Pa.

*He belonged to St. Leo's Parish and in the absence of a parochial school, he attended St. Vincent's School.

SISTERS FROM ST. VINCENT'S ORPHAN ASYLUM

1. School Sisters of Notre Dame (20)

Sister Mary Vincent Freuen, deceased
Sister Mary Hedwig Raab, deceased
Sister Mary Philip Neri Hagemann, deceased
Sister Mary Marina Will
Sister Mary Justa Boyle
Sister Mary Bertranda Feser
Sister Mary Rosella Loehle
Sister Mary Regina Doehlen
Sister Mary Flora Stoll
Sister Mary Agrada Schulmeister
Sister Mary Remigia Miller
Sister Mary Anthony Haebe
Sister Mary Adelheid Schmidt
Sister Mary Regulata Sonntag
Sister Mary Bertilla Stompf
Sister Mary Clarine Hetzel
Sister Mary Alois Tomaschek
Sister Mary Aquina Stuppert
Sister Mary Rosibia Schneider
Sister Mary Benedict Joseph Comley

2. Franciscan Sisters of Glen Riddle (2)

Sister Juliana (Margaret) Lambert, deceased
Sister Maria Hoffer

3. Carmelite Sisters of Port Trinidad (1)

Sister Ancilla (Joan) Torceka

SISTERS FROM ST. VINCENT'S PARISH (5)

Sister Mary Fridolin Herman, School Sisters of Notre Dame
Sister Mary Ephrem Lepping, School Sisters of Notre Dame.
Sister Mary Vera Lang, School Sisters of Notre Dame
Sister Mary Rosaline Roth, School Sisters of Notre Dame
Sister Evangeline Hepp, Franciscan Sister (Motherhouse Glen Riddle)



PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS ON THE OCCASION OF THE DIAMOND JUBILEE, (October 12, 1933)

JUBILEE BELLS



HERE are occasions and events that must live in the pages of history, there are memories that will not die, memories that must not be effaced from the minds of men. Such an occasion such an event was the Diamond Jubilee celebration of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum at Tacony. For weeks and weeks preceding October 12, 1933, there was hustle and bustle, planning and building, painting and decorating for the great day of Jubilee. That day was to celebrate in a glorious manner, the fact that for 75 long years St. Vincent's had occupied a notable place in the sun, had been a boon and a blessing to Philadelphia and its surroundings, doing a noble work, a work pleasing to the heart of God, welcoming and loving, nurturing and training hundreds and hundreds of children entrusted to its care fitting them bravely and confidently to face the struggle of life, educating them to go through life a credit to their church and an asset to their country.

This day of Jubilee marked the last page of the third epoch in the history of Tacony and at the same time was the opening page of the fourth epoch of that glorious history. There it proclaims to coming generations and to the world at large how dear to the hearts of the German Catholics had become that institution brought into being three quarters of a century ago, kept in being all that time through a generosity born of a genuine love for those who are the special friends of the Savior, the fatherless and the motherless a love akin to the love which prompted our Lord to say "Let the little ones come unto me". Yes this page in Tacony's history sounds the praises of those who constantly and cheerfully made sacrifices of time and money that St. Vincent's might grow might flourish might prosper. But it does a great deal more. It records the delivery of a sacred trust to the present and to future generations, a trust to which they dare not prove unfaithful, namely to cherish and love this institution as those have done who have gone before them, to preserve this noble institution which their fathers and mothers called into being, on the high level on which they left it and if at, all possible to make it a greater, a nobler and a better St. Vincent's, so that when the last page of this fourth epoch shall be written they too may feel the joy the pride the pleasure that flow from the knowledge of having done something worth while, something to bring smiles and sunshine in the lives of others, something to make the angels glad, something to draw down blessings untold upon those who knew and observed the commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself.

As was to be expected, all roads seemed to lead to Tacony on that Jubilee day. Not only hundreds but several thousands yielded

to the magnetic attraction which St. Vincent's always seems to exert on its countless friends. With joyful countenances they passed through the wide portals of the institution in one continual stream. Long before the scheduled time the large space surrounding the magnificent altar erected for the occasion in the rear of the main building, was crowded to its capacity. The main building elaborately and tastily decorated with flags and bunting served as a fitting background for the handsome, artistic and above all, devotional altar. At the appointed hour, the strains of the organ and the ringing of the bells announced the approach of the long line of clergy and the ministers who were to take part in the solemn pontifical High Mass of thanksgiving. It was an entrancing sight to see the officers of the mass, clothed in their costly and richly embroidered vestments, made still more dazzling and resplendent by the bright sun's rays which played upon them, ascend the platform of the altar, while St. Peter's Choir sang the *Ecce Sacerdos Magnus*. His Excellency, the Most Rev. Daniel J. Gercke Bishop of Tucson Arizona, a former pupil of St. Vincent's school was the celebrant of the mass. The Rev. Michael G. Will, C. SS. R., Rector of St. Peter's Church and President of the Board of Managers was the Archpriest. The Rev. Francis J. Hertkorn, Rector of St. Alphonsus Church and the Rev. Bernard Licking, C. SS. R., Rector of St. Boniface Church, both Vice-presidents of the Board were deacon and subdeacon of the mass. Another Vice-president of the Board the Rev. John C. Daniel, Rector of Holy Trinity Church was deacon of honor as was also the Rev. John P. Ludwig, the Rector of St. Hubert's Church, a former chaplain of the institution. The elaborate ceremonies were in charge of the Rev. Athanasius Pape, O. S. A., the present chaplain of the institution. After the Gospel of the Mass the Rev. Francis A. Auth, C. SS. R., of Baltimore, Md., a former President of the Board of Managers delivered an eloquent sermon. Sketching the history of the institution, he stressed the fact, that this Jubilee celebration was made possible, that St. Vincent's existence for 75 years was to be accounted for, not by the large donations and endowments of the wealthy and the great, not by financial aid given by the city or the state, not by any support received from the diocese but by the continual, if small, contributions of the German Catholics of the diocese. This fact he said spoke volumes for their love of the poor and the orphan. He then went on to show that the history of the Church was the history of Christian charity and the history of charity the history of the Church, and that the example of the first Christians had not lost its drawing power and was still being followed at the present time. As proof he pointed to St. Vincent's and the noble and efficient work done there by the Sisters of St. Francis for a short time and especially by the Sisters of Notre Dame. A glowing and well deserved tribute was then paid by the speaker to the various bodies and organizations, interested in the welfare of the institution. The religious ceremony was then brought to a proper close with solemn Benediction. This was followed by the chanting of the Church's hymn of praise and thanksgiving the *Te Deum*. The fervor and

enthusiasm with which it was sung, gave evidence that everyone present realized that we had much to be thankful for and that we were indeed deeply grateful.

His Excellency the Most Rev. Bishop Gercke then addressed the happy and attentive audience. In well chosen words he recalled the days he spent in St. Vincent's School, spoke of his deep affection and reverence for the Sisters then, and of his deep and sincere appreciation now for the good they had done for him. All that he was today he ascribed to the efforts of the Sisters during his stay at school. His beaming countenance bore testimony of the joy and happiness he felt, at being present on this occasion of the Diamond Jubilee.

In the afternoon the children gave an entertainment, which was a credit to them and their teachers and a delight to all who were fortunate enough to gain admission to the auditorium. The rest of the program took place in the open air in God's blessed sunshine. It consisted of two addresses, one by the Rev. President of the Board in which he commended the selfsacrifice and generosity manifested by the Sisters, the Board of Managers, the Ladies Aid Society and last but not least the countless friends and benefactors of St. Vincent's, pleading with all of them to continue in the same spirit and devotion, that St. Vincent's may be able to continue the noble the glorious work it has been doing for the past three quarters of a century. The other address was delivered by His Excellency the Most Rev. Bishop Gercke. Again he referred to the happy days spent in St. Vincent's School. He was lavish in his praise of the good Sisters of Notre Dame, heaped encomiums on the benefactors of the institution past and present and pleaded with his hearers not to grow remiss but to continue their lively interest in the asylum and to manifest it in a palpable way whenever an occasion arose.

The following day a Solemn Requiem Mass was sung for the deceased Sisters who had labored at St. Vincent's and for the deceased friends and benefactors of the institution.

In every way the Diamond Jubilee was an extraordinary, a wonderful a memorable celebration. If it has succeeded in making new friends for St. Vincent's, if it has strengthened and increased the love the interest and devotion of the friends it had, then it has served its purpose and we can truthfully say of the Jubilee Day, this was the day that the Lord hath made.

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